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CONTENTS

COMMENTS . . . . . Page 185
THE SILENCED SERVICE 187
THE CONSULTATIVE ASSEMBLY AT WORK. By Maurice Edelman, M.P. 188
DEATH COMES TO DAMASCUS. By Jon Kimche 188
A SWISS DIARY. By Critic 189
THIS ENGLAND 190
THE SONG OF THE LORELEI. By Sagittarius . 190
SMALLHOLDINGS. By Nigel Harvey 190
CALEDONIAN MARKET. By C. H. Rolph . . 191
SO THEY SAY . . . By Autolycus . . . 192
LETTERS FROM TWO ISLANDS. By J. B. Priestley 192
TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO 193
THE ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT:
The New Shaw. By T. C. Worsley . . 193
Proms. By Desmond Shawe-Taylor . . 194
The Movies. By William Whitebait . . 194
Radio Notes. By Mark Ogilvie . . 194
CORRESPONDENCE 196
From R. H. S. Crossman, M.P.; E. Penn ng-Rowsell; Professor F. R. Scott; Evelyn Waugh; G. R. Mitchell; Ian Mikardo, M.P.; and M. D. Anderson.
BOOKS IN GENERAL. By Graham Greene Page 198
REVIEWS:
Looking for Shakespeare. By J. I. M. Stewart 200
What Is Man? By Geoffrey Gorer . 200
Early French Art. By David Carritt . . 201
Harry Roberts. By Kingsley Martin . 202
New Novels. By J. D. Scott . . 203
The Man Who Was Wall Street. By Norman MacKenzie 203
Post-war Russia. By Alexander Werth 204
An Eccentric Squire. By Ralph Partridge . 205
WEEK-END COMPETITIONS 205

BLACK, RED AND GOLD

Two voices have been raised in applause at the results of last Sunday's elections in Western Germany. Mr. McCloy, the American High Commissioner, delighted presumably at the rout of the Communists and not displeased at the prospect of a Coalition from which the Social Democrats stand to be excluded, has declared that the outcome of the polls is "very gratifying." More cautiously, M. Schuman, reflecting French suspicions of the Social Democrats' "centralising" tendency, has hailed the results as evidence (he thinks) of substantial support in Germany for a federal regime. We find it difficult to share either M. Schuman's complacency, or, still more, Mr. McCloy's jubilation. After an election campaign in which the "respectable" parties—the Christian Democrats, Free Democrats and Social Democrats alike—vied with each other in demagogic denunciation of the British as the architects, through dismantling and commercial jealousy, of German unemployment and misery, West German voters have returned a Bundestag which gives every sign of being much more nationalistic than European-minded. The black, red and gold flag will fly challengingly over Bonn.

For what positive policy did Western Germans vote? They have given the two Right-of-Centre parties, the Christian Democrats and the Free Democrats, 191 seats out of the 402 seats in the Federal Parliament. Dr. Adenauer will doubtless claim that this was a vote for "free enterprise" and the continued pursuit of economic recovery on the capitalistic lines laid down since the currency reform. But since none of the parties came before the electorate with any detailed or convincing programme for dealing with the grave practical problems of unemployment, overcrowding, and mass impoverishment with which the West German State is confronted, it is by no means clear that the electorate gave any such clear verdict in favour of *laissez-faire* economics. Indeed, an equally intelligible interpretation of the voting is that large numbers of those who went to the polls recorded an "anti" vote. If less than 6 per cent. of the votes cast were for the Communists (as compared with over 9 per cent. in the *Land* elections of 1946-48) it was because Western Germany wanted to vote anti-Russian. Equally, the fall from 35 per cent. to 28 per cent. in the Social Democrats' poll may be regarded to a considerable extent as a vote against a party which, for all Dr. Schumacher's recent attacks on Mr. Bevin and dismantling, was still widely regarded as sponsored by the British Labour Government.

As it is, Dr. Adenauer, the prospective Premier, will head an anti-Left Coalition in which he will be forced to rely on some embarrassing associates. Even with the support of the small Centre Party (10 seats), he will not have a working majority; and, though he may dispense with the hysterical Party of Economic Reconstruction led by Loritz, "the blond Hitler," he will presumably have to admit into his Coalition some elements from the chauvinistic German Party and German Right Party, who between them secured 22 seats. When the French public has more time to study the extent to which Germany has swung to the Right, and the emergence to an influential position of extreme nationalist parties whose hopes are pinned openly on a Third World War, we doubt whether even the qualified satisfaction with which M. Schuman views these election results will be widely shared in Paris.

The ultimate consequences of the voting will depend very largely on the attitude towards Germany which Britain and France now adopt; and the necessity for a concerted Anglo-French approach to the problem is more than ever patent. Policy must be reviewed in the light of the plain fact that the polling has given a victory to resurgent German nationalism. Hatred of the Soviet Union, disillusionment with "British-made" democracy, the great pull of the Catholic Church and the still greater pull of hoped-for American dollars—these seem to have been the dominant factors in the election. If Western Germany voted less for any positive policy than for the German flag, its colours may fairly be said to stand now for the strength of the black international, the desire for revenge over red Russia and the lure of American gold.

Dollars and Exports

It is proper, as Europe's dollar position steadily deteriorates, for Mr. Hoffman to pay a visit to his Marshall Plan protégés. But to judge from his remarks in Paris this week, he is strangely complacent about the crisis. Sternly reminding the British that drastic import cuts—which would "mean only a lower standard of living in Europe"—are the wrong way to close the dollar gap, he could produce no other solution than an expansion of Europe's exports to the U.S. But in the face of Europe's patent inability to push these sales from the present level of less than one-half per cent. of U.S. consumption to the "break even" point of about two per cent., this is tantalising advice. If Mr. Hoffman is really seeking an "on-the-spot insight" he would do well to spend some time in studying Britain's problem as it looks from London, and not from Paris or Washington. This country could rightly be condemned by Americans for improvidence if it committed itself to a foolhardy import programme just when its dollar gap is widening, when there is a continuing fall in overall exports and when, through the agreements with India and, now, Pakistan, Britain is undertaking both to increase the volume of unrequited exports to these countries and to allow them a larger supply of dollars. To warn Britain that the time for achieving financial stability is "breathlessly short" verges on mockery. The Cabinet is now considering what specific proposals may be put up during the Washington talks with any hope of

success. The more Britain is painted as the recalcitrant in the European family, the harder it will be for Sir Stafford Cripps and Mr. Bevin to convince the Americans that the crisis arises as much from the U.S. surplus as from Europe's deficit.

Britain's Critics

Meanwhile, columnists and European correspondents of American newspapers are preparing their readers to look on the journey of Sir Stafford Cripps and Mr. Bevin as a mission from a bankrupt firm appealing to its chief creditor to save an extravagant and incompetent management from going into liquidation. All this is scarcely calculated to make Mr. Snyder more accommodating; and, so embarrassing had the flood of American press criticism become, that the *Economist*—whose realistic advice, according to the *Baltimore Sun*, was being wrongly ignored by British Socialists and by this journal in particular—evidently considered it prudent to execute a remarkable editorial *volte face*. Last month our "realistic" contemporary declared flatly that "the present crisis is not caused by American instability but by the final revelation that the British Government's economic policy . . . cannot be made to work at all except at the height of a world boom and then only with the aid of a dollar subsidy." Since the Labour Government was so blind or foolish as to reject the recipe of deflationary readjustment and "moderate" unemployment, the prospect was that British economy would grind "slowly to a standstill amidst empty shops and mass unemployment." Last week, however, a very different note was struck by the *Economist* in its editorial comments. Having drawn attention to the fact that Britain's post-war performance — whether judged by growth of production or by the increasing proportion of dollar imports covered by dollar exports—was highly commendable, it went on to say that "Britain's present difficulties are not due to anything that can properly be called Socialism; they are not due, save in a minor degree, to policies of the Labour Government." On the contrary, the crisis was due essentially to an "underlying maladjustment between Europe and America"; and "to choose this moment to pin all blame for a vast shift in the world's economic surface to the action of one Power [i.e., Britain] . . . shows a quite distorted sense of proportion." We trust that this belated correction in our contemporary's vision will apply equally to those elements in Washington which insist on viewing Britain and its Labour Government through jaundice-yellow spectacles.

Uneasy Sisters

India and Pakistan this week celebrate the second anniversary of their independence. Both have considerable achievements to record. India in particular can acclaim the remarkable feat of settling the problem of the princely States with the minimum of force. Both Dominions would have far more to boast of were it not for the Kashmir struggle. The only solution to prolonged war in Kashmir would seem to be the acceptance of partition roughly on the basis of the military *status quo*. Pakistan, however, indignantly repudiates any such suggestion, and India, which was for a time more realistic, seems now to have abandoned any hope of such a settlement. Rumours run round that Pakistan is arming for further hostilities in Kashmir; if they began again, it will be hard to restrain the Sikhs from crossing the frontier and seizing Lahore. While this trouble continues, the brains and treasure of both nations are wasted. The vast social problems which both Governments are pledged to solve are neglected. In India the drift is away from the Centre and towards the extremes of Communism and Hindu nationalism. The Western Powers begin to talk of India as the Eastern bulwark against Asiatic Communism—not taking very seriously, perhaps, threats that Pakistan may leave the Commonwealth. What is wanted, of course, is a joint policy of social change and a deliberate programme for raising the standard of living for the whole sub-Continent.

Prospects at The Hague

The United Nations Commission for Indonesia was last week in the unusual position of being able to report to Lake Success that it had carried out its orders to mediate between the Netherlands and the Republic. The Republican Government was restored to Jogjakarta; the parties had agreed on the cessation of hostilities and a cease-fire agreement, and the delegates were already on their way to confer at The Hague. At the last moment the Central Joint Military Board, noting Dutch allegations of 'incidents" in East and Central Java, issued a warning to both sides to refrain from violating the cease-fire agreement. It is a good augury that fears that either side would try at the last minute to manœuvre for position by new *faits accomplis* have now been dissipated. Most of the delegates are already in The Hague discussing the preliminary arrangements for the Conference. Prime Minister Hatta spent some time with Pandit Nehru on the way to Europe and addressed the Indian Constituent Assembly. Indian support, he said, had been an inspiration to the Republicans. Shrewd, intelligent, and a man of great personal integrity, Mr. Hatta recalled that agreements previously reached with the Dutch had invariably become dead letters because they were reluctant to part with power and share responsibility on an equal footing with Indonesians. The only alternative now to a "Mountbatten plan," which they originally desired, was the unconditional transfer of real and complete sovereignty to the people of Indonesia. This, he explained, was why he was going to The Hague. The Federalists now share with the Republicans the hope that this transfer can be arranged in the first stage of the Conference, after which the real problems, notably economic, can be tackled. The Dutch, with their economy so largely dependent on the prosperity of Indonesia, will be well advised to accept the fact that that prosperity can only be regained by friendly co-operation on terms of equality.

Belgium's New Government

The long interregnum in Belgium, following M. Spaak's resignation, has been ended by the formation, under M. Eyskens, of a coalition of Christian Socialists and Liberals, with the Socialists now in opposition. The "royal question" is not brought much nearer to a climax, since the Liberals are deeply divided on the advisability of the King's return. The main significance of the dropping of the Socialist Party from the coalition is that Belgium is now evidently headed for a regime of even more unqualified free enterprise. The Ministry of Economic Planning is suppressed; the subventions payable to the railways and the nationalised coal industry are to be progressively reduced; a 16 per cent. cut in income tax is to be made possible by economies in the national office of social security and by a general pruning of the governmental machine; and even town planning is to be curtailed in order to stimulate private house-building. By these means Belgium may become still more the "pet exhibit" in Europe of the United States; but whether unadulterated *laissez faire* and unlimited imports will work for long in a country which is still covering much less than half its dollar deficit is another matter.

The Utility Cuts

It is to be hoped that the National Chamber of Trade will not interpret Mr. Wilson's readiness to review the incidence of the utility price cuts as a vindication of its methods of protest. The threat to defy the law and refuse to operate the cuts was ill-advised and unconvincing: the retail trade is structurally in a weak position to carry out an effective and disciplined "rebellion" against the Government. Mr. Wilson's second thoughts were probably prompted more by quiet representations from the Co-ops that placing the whole burden of the immediate five per cent. cut upon the retail distributor was unfair and would fall harshly upon shops with a majority of working-class customers, in whose case the proportion of utility to total sales may run as high as eighty per cent. The modified scheme now suggested provides apparently for a two and a half per cent. reduction in the selling price of retail stocks and a subsequent cut, bringing the total to five per cent. spread equally between manufacturer, wholesaler and shopkeeper, when supplies now on order reach the retailer. This seems a fair way out of the controversy. But will the consumer benefit very much in the end? The answer depends on the extent to which the trade tends to switch from utility goods, with their now narrowed profit margins, to uncontrolled products and how far the Board of Trade can prevent compensatory reductions in quality.

Truth and Tory Propaganda

It is an old axiom that propaganda need be neither consistent nor truthful. But it is odd to find Tory newspapers quoting, with more approval than accuracy, an article in *Pravda* which attacked the Labour Government. On June 12, *British Ally* published an interesting analysis of wages and prices in this country. A routine Soviet reply to this, written by a Mme Khomutova, who spent two years in this country, appeared in *Pravda* a month later. Then "Peterborough" in the *Daily Telegraph*, took up the controversy on July 27. He seems to have worked on a mistranslation of Mme Khomutova; "two pitiful pieces of bread," for instance, are not the same thing as "two miserable sandwiches"! He rapped *British Ally* over the knuckles for "silly propaganda," especially for an "extraordinary" sentence about British rents which, in both the original article supplied by the C.O.I. and its Russian translation, is accurate and reasonable, but only extraordinary in the version given by "Peterborough" himself. A few days later, the *Evening Standard* decided the time had come to "investigate the not-so-free-Press of Britain," namely *British Ally*. It proceeded to cite the "inept misrepresentation" of the article on purchasing power, arguing that Mme Khomutova had "with justice" described it as "false and tendentious" and implying that *British Ally* served no purpose but to provide openings for Soviet propaganda. The *Evening Standard* was relying, so far as can be judged, on the distorted account given by "Peterborough." Its quotations were identical and thus identically mistranslated. Its editorial did not contain a single fact other than those given by "Peterborough." Yet it demanded, on the basis of this false evidence, the closure of the "irresponsible" *British Ally*! Tory newspapers are now so anxious to score a propaganda trick against the British Government that they are driven to hash up tit-bits cooked by their Soviet counterparts.

THE SILENCED SERVICE

PUBLISHED at the tag end of a long Parliamentary session, the Masterman Report on "the political activities of civil servants" almost escaped attention. The Government accepted it without even bothering to consult the Staff Associations, on whose initiative the Committee had been established; and it was only when most Members had already dispersed that a quite inadequate debate took place on the Adjournment. Apparently, however, it was sufficient to make the Cabinet have second thoughts; and there is now a possibility that the Prime Minister may reconsider his precipitate acceptance of recommendations which, if taken to their logical conclusion, could lead to the denial of basic political rights, not only to some 470,000 civil servants, but to all office workers in nationalised industries and local government services.

The Masterman Committee was established owing to the demand by the staff side of the National Whitley Council for a radical relaxation of the customs and rules limiting the political activity of civil servants. The Staff Associations urged that any civil servant should be permitted to stand for Parliament and, if adopted, should be given a month's leave on full pay to nurse his constituency (and another month in order to fight the election), as well as unlimited special leave for the term of his parliamentary service. They further pressed for the removal of all specific prohibitions on political activity, in particular the rule which at present lays down that a civil servant should not "put himself forward prominently on one side or the other." "Freedom tempered with discretion" was how they summed up their case.

It is not surprising that, in his invitation to serve on the Committee, Sir Stafford Cripps bluntly told its members that the Government repudiated any demands for "a radical change in the political status of civil servants." Indeed, it is difficult to imagine that the representatives of the Staff Associations seriously believed that they would gain all that they asked for. To grant to every senior civil servant the right to indulge in all the political activities of the ordinary citizen would render British administration open to every kind of political pressure.

Unfortunately, however, the Committee was not content to reject the extreme demands of the Staff Associations. Instead, it has itself rushed to the other extreme, and proposes a system of compulsory mental neutrality, which is both impractical and unnecessary. If the Cabinet finally accept this Report, they will be showing a lack of confidence in the integrity of the civil service which, on the Committee's own testimony, is completely undeserved. To quote from its Report, "in present conditions a Minister coming into a Department is able to rely on entirely loyal service to his ideas from all civil servants alike. He has no reason even to consider whether any particular civil servant is or is not in sympathy with his political views. He is, indeed, able to assume that, whatever the civil servant's sympathies, they would not affect his advice in any given case."

In view of this glowing tribute to the discretion of the civil servants, it is difficult to understand why the Masterman Committee has found it necessary to recommend an elaborate code, designed to enforce discretion by precise rule. They argue at one point that "the extension of the functions of the State in the last few decades greatly increases the need for maintaining the impartiality of the service." But if, as they assure us, civil servants have not been guilty of improper political conduct during these decades, it is surely unnecessary to set up a new set of rules.

Let us see what these rules are. Broadly, the Committee proposes to grant complete freedom not only to all "industrial civil servants" (400,000), but also to 260,000 members of "minor and manipulative grades" in the Post Office and elsewhere. They will all be permitted to stand for Parliament, as well as for local elections, to canvass, to speak on public platforms on national issues, and to hold office in political organisations. All these rights, however, would, if the Report were implemented, in future be prohibited to the 451,000 whom the Committee classifies as civil servants proper. From the topmost Permanent Under-Secretary to the humblest little girl in the typing pool, they are to be debarred from any form of public interest in "party politics."

On the other hand, they are to be allowed to stand as party candidates in local elections. Very revealingly, the Report observes: "Ideally, an arrangement permitting only Independent candidature would offer the only solution." Apparently this ideal solution, so attractive to the academic mind of Mr. Masterman, was too much for some of his colleagues, who dubbed it "illusory." Instead, we have a very remarkable recommendation. The civil servant proper may stand as a party candidate on two conditions: (1) "He must avoid becoming involved in national party political controversy"; and (2) "He may not engage in canvassing for or overt support of other party candidates." This means in practice that Miss Robinson, the Fabian Socialist from the typing pool of the War Office, may fight a municipal election if she separates herself rigidly from all her Socialist colleagues and does not get involved in discussion of housing, the health service, multi-lateral schools, basic petrol, Government expenditure—or, indeed, any issue on which local elections are fought.

But suppose Miss Robinson does not want to be a Councillor, but merely a good Fabian. She may not canvass, or appear on any political platform. Even if the General Secretary of her Union, Mr. L. C. White, makes a violent pro-Communist speech at the Annual Conference, she is forbidden to reply to him. On the other hand, she can, both at Annual Conference and in her suburban home, express her view if "a national beauty spot were threatened by some Government proposal to construct, for example, a factory or a bombing range." On this issue, indeed, she may actually attack the Government (as long as it is the Air Ministry's bombing range and not that of the War Office, where she works), relying on the Committee's decision that civil servants may take part in public discussion of any matter which has not "become one of party controversy."

One of the remarkable facts about the Masterman Report is that it was obviously composed in and for the stratosphere of Whitehall. It dismisses not only the recommendations of the Staff Associations, but their assessment of the views of their members; and it accepts without question the opinions of the Heads of Departments on what their subordinates would or would not like. Moreover, it has drawn up its code on the explicitly stated assumption that the "team spirit," which unites the typists' pool and the Under-Secretary, is so strong that the typist would resent being granted any political liberties denied to her boss (see paragraph 65 (i)). "All these grades, from administrative to typing, form an entity," it observes. And again, "Each contributes in varying degree, according to his status, towards the decisions made by the administrative officers or towards the submissions made to Ministers.

This picture of a single team, integrated down from the Under-Secretary to the typist, is an academic fantasy. In reality, the Administrative Grade, which consists of 3,500 Assistant Principals and upwards, are almost the only people in the Civil Service who in any real sense advise Ministers. It is a piece of pure pedantry to extend the necessary limitations on party political activity, which must be imposed on this small ruling class in Whitehall, to one section of their underlings while permitting another section complete freedom. And what of the 3,500 themselves? We can see no reason why any codification of existing practice is necessary for these highly responsible officials. If their discretion is not sufficient (and the Committee itself says that it is), they should not have been given their present positions.

Even more disturbing, the Report seems to recommend an attitude to controversial political issues which, whenever it is adopted by a senior civil servant, as it sometimes is, makes him either ineffective or hypocritical. The civil servant, says the Committee, should have "a mind untinged by political prepossessions." This sort of mind may be proper in an Oxford or Cambridge common-room. In Whitehall, it is, thank heavens, comparatively rare. Only a civil servant who is either a cynical careerist, or totally uninterested in his work, can be "untinged by political prepossession." Were Sidney Webb, Sir Robert Morant and Sir Eyre Crowe bad civil servants because they held passionate views on controversial political issues? How can an official in the Treasury offer constructive advice to Sir Stafford Cripps if his mind is "untinged by any prepossession" for a planned economy or, alternatively, a free market? How can a Foreign Office Under-Secretary be of service to Mr. Bevin if he is completely neutral on the issue of German rearmament?

It is sheer hypocrisy to pretend that the civil servant has no political views; and it is destructive of our finest traditions to advocate that he should eliminate prepossessions as far as possible. What he must do in proffering advice is to state the problem really fairly before he propounds the solution he favours. Nothing tickles the vanity of politicians more than the delusion that they themselves have all the ideas, and that civil servants are just neutral machines for providing them with facts and meekly executing their orders. If this Report fosters the illusion that mental neutrality is a virtue in a civil servant, it can do nothing but harm. Indeed, it is precisely because the political ideas of senior civil servants have such a tremendous influence on Government policy that they are bound to limit severely their external political activities.

The fact is that, on the evidence of the Committee itself, there is no reason for any new restrictions; nor have they made any case for enforcing upon lower grades the severe limitations on public political activity which the 3,500 members of the Administrative Grade have always voluntarily applied to themselves. There is no valid reason why all civil servants—apart from these 3,500—should not enjoy the freedom which is now to be accorded not only to "industrials" but to the so-called minor and manipulative grades. As for the 3,500 themselves, we hope that they know more about the proper attitude which the senior civil servant should adopt to controversial issues than the authors of the Masterman Report.

THE CONSULTATIVE ASSEMBLY AT WORK

CHURCHILL, raising a point of order at Strasbourg, spoke of ". . . the forces that have called this Assembly into being." No doubt he was thinking chiefly of the mysterious and indefinable impulses of history which, in his view, have driven the States of Europe towards unity. But the European Movement itself could not have been far from his mind—the European Movement that can claim to be the only pressure-group in the world with a flag. Green and white, it hangs in every street with almost the same incidence as the European Movement's own managers, lobbiers, secretaries and hangers-on in the *coulisses* of the Assembly.

But though most delegates do not want the Consultative Assembly to become an extension of the European Movement, the Movement, enlarged by Churchill's prestige, has members in each national delegation, and is able to bring powerful influence to bear on any matter considered by the Assembly. This was particularly impressive during the election of the vice-presidents. The British Socialists, with Dutch support, put forward the name of William Whiteley, the Labour Chief Whip, for one of the four vacancies. Since Whiteley is among the fairest and most reasonable of men, the nomination might have been expected to commend itself to all the British delegation—or as the Tories prefer to call themselves, the British representatives. Instead, Ronald Ross, supported by Churchill, challenged it on the grounds that it wasn't fitting for a Minister to have a vice-presidential chair. Since Whiteley, like any other delegate, had full right of nomination, Herriot, then acting President, rejected Ross's point of order. In the event, Lord Layton, proposed by the Tories and sustained by his supporters among European Movement members, was elected, although a solid British vote would have given Whiteley an easy majority. The fissure in the British delegation was deliberately and ostentatiously made by the Tories, who believe that, whoever may have an electoral majority at Westminster, it is they, with their European associates, who determine the majority at Strasbourg. Churchill's attitude to the Socialists began, as a Frenchman put it, with cordial indifference and continued with cordial hostility.

The European Socialists, about thirty-five in all, supported Whiteley's nomination. The previous evening, some French Socialists had suggested that the Socialist Parties should combine to form a European Parliamentary group which could act in concert. The British Socialists turned down the proposal. They felt that there might be national considerations which would override an abstract fraternity; nor could they align themselves with the anti-Catholic attitude of some Continental Socialists. But they did agree to enter into general consultations from time to time on fundamental matters affecting policy.

One practical difficulty of Socialist co-operation had lain in the seating arrangements at the Assembly. Sitting in alphabetical order, members are unable to engage in the whisper, the hiss and the note-passing which are the usual means of parliamentary consultation between individuals and parties. Both Churchill and Morrison spend a lot of time strolling across the Chamber to consult, the one Macmillan, the other Dalton. The Assembly has the air, provisionally, of an Assembly of Independents. But it is a deceptive air. The huddles in the corridors and the dinners in the villas replace for the present the familiar party aggregations in national parliaments. Before long, there may well be an informal reshuffling of Members which will make them neighbours by belief rather than by alphabetical accident.

The Assembly has been fortunate in its early unanimity about its first President. M. Spaak is a firm Chairman, and declares himself the servant of the Chamber with the same sincerity as the Speaker of the House of Commons. In many ways, however, his task is more like that of the Speaker in the days of Charles I. That is to say, he will have to protect and assert the rights of the Consultative Assembly in ever increasing measure against the prerogative of the Committee of Ministers.

The Assembly will want to extend its powers; the Committee will want to contain them. In Churchill, Spaak has an urgent commoner who has already impressed on him the wish of the Assembly to make its own decisions on its agenda without leave of the Committee of Ministers.

The provisional agenda authorised by the Committee covers economics, social security and culture, and admits other kindred subjects. It seems likely that delegates will want to talk about wider subjects such as the admission of Germany. Under present arrangements, the entry of new States requires the approval of the Committee of Ministers. Yet, in the Assembly's confident and energetic mood, the representatives at Strasbourg seem likely to persist in the demand that they should have the right to determine absolutely the Assembly's composition.

The question remains; what is the Assembly going to *do*? For several days, the Committee of Ministers hesitated as to whether to admit into the agenda any general discussion on the objects of the Assembly. The Ministers preferred to confine the Assembly to the lower, and as they claimed, more practical plane of European passports and tunnels. But the representatives, deeply concerned with the question of organising Europe's unity, have insisted on a discussion of the major theme.

At the moment, there appear to be three main parties of opinion in the Assembly—the federalists, the functionalists and the mystics. The federalists are to be found in all political parties; the mystics chiefly in the conservative parties. The functionalists are represented in the Committee of Ministers and the Foreign Offices who dislike the intrusion of the Assembly upon their sovereignty. But there are many functionalists, particularly among the Northern representatives, who while believing in the need for the eventual federation of Europe, want to approach it pragmatically by enlarging the working arrangements between Europe's states.

The mystics, fortunately few, are unhelpful and dangerous. Befuddled by the steam of their own rhetoric, they see in European unity no more than a reaction of conservative forces against Social Democracy. With tears in their eyes they say "Europe"; and in their hearts is a lament for privilege. They speak of freedom, and mean *laissez-faire;* of stability, and mean Conservatism.

Yet even the mystics are divided on the question of Germany. The French suspicion of Germany is deep-rooted and bitter, as Herriot's opening speech showed. As soon as a Frenchman begins a reference to Germany with the words, "We esteem the Germany of Goethe," we can expect the kick to come in the second half of the sentence. In Herriot's case, it came with a reference to the concentration camps and torture chambers of Nazi Germany. In fact, Churchill's enthusiasm for the early admission of Germany to the Assembly has found little echo, although so far, little direct opposition, except in the qualms of the French. Strasbourg has been too recently restored to France for the French to feel completely happy about the symbolic value of the city as a focus of reconciliation.

So far, then, the achievement of the Assembly can be summed up in emotional rather than in practical terms. It has been established; it has made Europe think in terms of a European Parliament; it has evolved a procedure; it is struggling to obtain new rights and powers. In composition, it has probably more jurists and permanent politicians than a directly elected Assembly would have; and trade-union opinion is inadequately represented. But this first session of the Assembly is none the worst for these apparent defects. The Assembly's task is largely constitutional and theoretical; and for that end, the representatives are well qualified. The most enduring democratic Parliaments like the British Parliament have grown organically and have been the product of conflict. The prospect of conflict in the Assembly is a bright one. We can, therefore, hope that in course of time, the Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe, now firmly founded, will become a European institution, respected as a legislature and drawing its sap not from organisations of enthusiasts or from specialists but from the people of Europe as a whole.

Strasbourg, August 12. MAURICE EDELMAN

DEATH COMES TO DAMASCUS

WHO killed President Zaim? I, says Colonel Hinnawi, his friend and assistant of a few weeks ago; I and a few other brother officers thought that Zaim was not democratic enough for Syria; so we called in the old boys who had ruled Syria so well and so democratically for the last thirty years. This confession has been accepted as reasonable by the Foreign Office and by most publicists. Abdullah has already sent congratulations to the new Government in Damascus. He has a knack for doing openly what his backers think privately.

But was Zaim really killed by a group of outraged Syrian democrats? The composition of the new Government hardly suggests this. Syrian Governments—it has to be admitted—have always shown a monotonous constancy: the same names, the same families for thirty years. Syrian politicians, one has the impression, rarely die, and then either from very old age or very suddenly. The men who have returned to power to restore Syria's democratic freedoms which were threatened by Zaim's reforms have a long record of meeting the buffetings of world politics. The elderly President who replaces the late Zaim—he was born in 1865—has served the Ottoman Empire, and the Arab rebellion against it. He founded the Nationalist National Bloc opposed to the French Mandate and became President of Syria under the French Mandate. When France fell in 1940, he remained a powerful influence under Vichy rule: he sent a message of support to Rashid Ali when the Iraqi Army rose against the Allies in Baghdad in the critical spring of 1941; he welcomed the Free French when they invaded Syria a few months later, and was one of the chief opponents of later French occupation. But he could not adjust himself to Zaim's rule. For Zaim had firmly excluded him from political life, forced him into retirement and threatened the influence of his family.

Zaim was faced not only with these deeply embedded old families when he came to power; he was also somewhat embarrassed by the

peculiar loyalties of Syrian politicians. Zaim took office denouncing the muddle in the country, and even more in the army, which had been let down so badly in Palestine. But he appointed the Commander of the Syrian Army in Palestine, who had been one of the main pillars of the regime which Zaim overthrew, as his Minister of Defence. Now comes Colonel Hinnawi and executes Zaim for tyranny and corruption—particularly in the army—and promptly appoints the same man also as the Minister of Defence of his new Government. Similarly, the Minister who was Zaim's Minister of Information now joins the Government of the men who shot Zaim as traitor, as Minister of Agriculture.

The story of what lay behind Zaim's coup begins last March. Cairo radio and the Cairo press started a sudden violent campaign at the beginning of March against the President of Syria, Shoukri Kouwatli, and against his Prime Minister. It came as a great surprise, for the Syrians had always sided with the Egyptians in the internal differences in the Arab League—and none more so than the President and the Premier who were now under fire. The Egyptians accused the Syrian leaders of having made a private deal with the Iraqi Premier, Nuri Pasha, and of agreeing to support the Iraqi proposals for reforming the Arab League and for the creation of a Federation of Fertile Crescent States which Syria had opposed hitherto.

At the same time the Syrian Government was having trouble with its Chief of Staff, Colonel Zaim. He had been arrested, but his supporters in the army had forced his release. On the last day of March, Zaim—a Kurd—using exclusively Circassian troops, overthrew the Government in an almost bloodless revolution. For a few days the situation was tense. Both Iraqi and Transjordan troops seemed ready to march into Syria and prevent the frustration of plans which after many years seemed on the eve of success. Zaim cleverly parried the threat. For days after he came to power he had most people—though not the French or the Egyptians—guessing about his intentions. He made press statements saying he favoured a Greater Syria, or a Union of the Fertile Crescent States. He raised hopes in Amman and Baghdad. He established himself in office, sent the army to the Transjordan and Iraqi frontier, and forced the President to resign.

Zaim flew to Cairo to see King Farouk. A joint policy to counter the Hashemite plans was agreed upon, with Zaim to make the running and Farouk to provide the backing. Zaim returned and began his attacks against the Hashemites in Amman and Baghdad—and against their backers.

Zaim, however, was conscious of both his weak and strong points. He needed support from the Powers, he needed money and he needed arms and equipment for the army, which was his main support. The French were the first to recognise Zaim's regime. They provided him immediately with a £3 millions credit. They helped—by an extremely generous and uneconomic gesture—to stabilise Syria's currency, and they were around with diplomatic encouragement. French policy during these slow negotiations encouraged every Syrian step directed against consolidating or establishing Transjordan's influence in Palestine. The French advised the Israelis to support an independent State in Arab Palestine. They sought to redirect Israeli policy from friendship with Transjordan to friendship with Zaim—at the expense of King Abdullah and the British.

Even the British Middle East envoys at their meeting in London last month concluded that their earlier assessment of Zaim was wrong. They revised their opinion. The wagon was to be hitched to the new star of Zaim. Abdullah and Nuri were no longer the favoured sons of Whitehall. The French had to be prevented from setting foot once more in the Levant.

But even that was only a passing phase. Zaim was not any more looking to the Quai d'Orsay for its dubious help. He had now more formidable backing. He had signed the agreement with the Arabian American Oil Company for the passage of the TAPline through Syria, and he had come to terms with the Americans. United Nations officials who visited Damascus last month returned to Lausanne and reported a complete change. The French phase had passed and the American phase was in full flood. Mr. Keeley, the American Minister, was the key man, and the conflict in Damascus was not so much between Zaim and his opponents as between Mr. James H. Keeley versus the rest—composed primarily of the French and British missions, official and unofficial.

Somewhere, therefore, in this complicated jigsaw, Zaim fell foul of some Power. In politics it is not always easy to point to causes until the beneficiaries are known. So far, it would seem that King Abdullah and the Iraqis are both not displeased with the course of events, whereas the Egyptians and the French are deeply chagrined. There are no flags at half mast in Whitehall, while in Washington the lesson may be learned that in the Middle East things are never quite so simple as they appear on the expense account.

JON KIMCHE

A SWISS DIARY

NOT to like Switzerland is not to like civilisation—at any rate, bourgeois civilisation. Not to like order, punctuality, good food, courtesy, cleanliness, flowers and a proper respect for money. Now there have been, and still are, many who despise these civilised things. Some, like Gauguin and Rimbaud, run away from civilisation to the South Seas. Van Gogh, who equally disliked it, was content with a lunatic asylum at Arles after cutting off his ear by way of protest. Thoreau was less drastic, expounding his preference for the simple life in a wood in New England. More often the critics of civilisation pour out their bile in expensive and profitable books written in very comfortable civilised quarters. Edward Carpenter was, I believe, living in the South of England when he wrote *Civilisation: Its Cause and Cure*. Spengler seems to have imagined that Germany was a civilised country when he prophesied the Decline of the West. Nietsche wrote *Also Sprach Zarathustra* in the most civilised and exquisite of wooded peninsulas in the loveliest of all Swiss valleys. I walked there myself the other day and bathed in the emerald lake which, for Nietsche, so darkly boiled and foamed; I ignored the winds of prophecy (if they were about) and decided that I did like civilisation; rolls with butter, honey and coffee for breakfast, a path up the mountain with a scramble when you approach the glacier, and the knowledge that hot water and a good dinner will be there at the end of the day.

* * *

I passed two elderly Swiss ladies in a high valley where the path breaks up and divides. They stopped me. "Could you tell me," said one, "which is the right way to go?" "That," I said, "depends where you wish to arrive." "Oh," she said, "it doesn't matter to us. We are on pleasure." "Then," said I, "it doesn't matter which path you take, for all are pleasurable."

The ladies, I take it, meant something quite sensible. Being Swiss, they felt that a walk should end at an *Aussichtpunkt*. They would scrupulously avoid stepping off the path on to the enchanting tapestry of flowers, shortly to be reaped, sometimes on slopes as steep as the roof of a house. Did not a notice in five languages say that it was "forbidden to walk on the grass before hay-making by a fine of two francs"? Nor would they want to take a steep path towards an unattainable summit. They needed guidance mainly because all paths were equally attractive. So it is in Switzerland; you can scarcely go wrong. Just as Britain was providentially called to rule the waves, so Switzerland was specially created to be the playground of Europe, a sort of gorgeous national park, situated precisely in the centre—neutral, peaceful and incomparably lovely in both winter and summer. If you are adventurous, you can climb or ski. If you are old, you can walk, satisfied with the knowledge that the view from the lower slopes is, in reality, as fine as from the top, though less gratifying to ambition. If you are lazy, you can sun-bathe, following the strange new fashion by which, reversing all historical precedents, the Whites seek to make themselves as black as possible. Nor do the sordid miseries of the outside world obtrude themselves. Two great wars have swept over Europe and left Switzerland unscathed. She has built the economy that goes with neutrality. There are, it is true, remote Swiss valleys where the peasants are desperately poor, and one sees the huge American streamlined cars of Zürich millionaires becoming entangled in the village street with the cows, as they stroll unconcerned, with bells peacefully tolling, to and from their pasture. But though this contrast exists between the old and the new, the rich and the poor, and though the figures for cirrhosis of the liver and some other unhappy diseases are high, it remains true that Switzerland is uniquely prosperous and that if a high standard of living and an orderly, reasonable life are the tests of civilisation, then here we have it at its best.

* * *

But are these the tests? It is odd that a country that has inspired so much romance in its visitors has itself contributed so little to the arts, so little great poetry or noble literature. It is idle to say, by way of explanation, that Switzerland is profoundly commercial and that the commercial mind is antipathetic to the arts. Holland was commercial enough in the days of its great painters; no country could lay more store by business than Britain of the industrial revolution and no country was more fertile in the literature of protest. I am here opening one of the most involved and inconclusive of all controversies. We do not know the soil in which the flowers of the spirit blossom. As long as men and women spend most of their lives in drudgery—as most of them have always done so far in history—so long will they assume that the removal of drudgery will in itself produce the Millenium. But that is clearly a fallacy. Modern American literature is steeped in the revolt against material success, against the futility of a life devoted to obtaining more goods. Nor is this revolt merely a sign of capitalist decadence. The problem is even more relevant to Communist and Socialist theory. There is no proof that a satisfying culture is the automatic offspring of plenty and equality. Indeed, it seems possible that the revolt against civilisation will continue and increase in a society in which the finest energies of men and women are no longer spent in the struggle for social change.

* * *

Two remarkable men whom I have known for many years have died in the last few days. Dr. Maurice Newfield was best known to the world

as the author of controversial books about eugenics and birth control. He was also the editor of the *Eugenics Review*. He edited it from his bed. For many years he had been wasting away, slowly dying of tuberculosis. He seemed to be kept alive only by the intensity of his interest in the world around him—politics, science, possible methods of birth control in the Far East, and Assiacs's chess column. The other friend who has died this week is Tom Wintringham. In his case, death was sudden and unexpected. In the Thirties the public knew him as an excellent novelist and as the military leader of the British who fought in Spain. He quarrelled there with the Communists, but remained a thoughtful, non-doctrinaire Marxist. He was one of the most stimulating companions. I suppose the time when he was best known to the public was in 1940, when the British for the first time thought of having to fight partisan warfare against a German invader. In spite of the bitter opposition of the War Office, he became the chief instructor at Osterley Park, where self-conscious L.D.V.s crawled through the woods learning tough and ungentlemanly ways of killing.

* * *

I did not myself see any British tourists in Switzerland behaving as a correspondent in *The Times* alleges that they do. I did not observe any going about in gangs or making the Alps hideous with their vulgar noises. What is true is that the British who travel to-day come from a much wider range of society than they used to. If it is good manners to keep yourself to yourself when you go abroad, to wrap a rug round your knees and to be extremely superior and reserved when mixing with foreigners, then there is no doubt that British manners are no longer as good as they used to be. Today you find parties of British behaving in a natural, unself-conscious way. They are friendly, and, if they are sometimes boorish, that is only when they are ignorant. Specialists in art or architecture or religion have always disliked parties of people marching into the Sistine chapel looking obviously bored and asking ignorant questions about the date of Michael Angelo and the habits of the Pope. Moreover, if the British were unpopular in the past, their unpopularity was tempered by their wealth. To-day it is the Americans who have the money; they are more easily forgiven than the British, who combine ignorance with an enforced parsimony.

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Prizes are awarded of £1 for the first entry and 5/- for each of the others printed.
Paste entries on a POSTCARD.

A brass band is to be formed in Dartmoor to encourage 500 convicts to take an eight-month course in home-making. . . . The course will be heralded by brass band versions of such songs as "Home, Sweet Home."—*Daily Express*. (B. Hall.)

Most people are pained and ashamed when they hear news about strikes, etc., announced before news about the Royal Family. I would ask all loyal people to send a post card to the B.B.C. urging them to put Royal news in its proper place. —Letter in *Yorkshire Post*. (Mrs. J. Attwell.)

Flight-Lieutenant —, station security officer, said it was not in order for mess orderlies to prepare food and wait upon ladies living in the bunk of an American sergeant.—*Daily Express*. (G. Jago.)

The people of this country like to see air racing, but they have not yet learned to *want* an Air Force, as they want cigarettes and chocolates and movies. Can we teach them?—Letter in *Sunday Times*. (Roy Budden.)

THE SONG OF THE LORELEI

I know well what it may betoken
How many are feeling depressed;
Old Herrenvolk echoes have woken
In regions of Germany (West).

The sunset-hued landscape is smiling
And calmly the Rhine flows on,
But a siren with ballads beguiling
Has made her appearance at Bonn.

She has dived from her musical eyrie
In glittering garments arrayed—
A cross between Wotan's Valkyrie
And Gretchen, an innocent maid.

Her trimmings and tresses are golden,
And she sings a traditional strain;
It has the familiar olden
Nationalistic refrain.

The burden is often repeated—
"The world is to Germans unjust!
Our people were never defeated!
Our Wehrmacht was true to its trust!"

She warbles and beckons and glistens,
While combing her golden hair,
And the boatman loiters and listens
To that rather hackneyed air.

The conquerors in occupation
Her corny performance allow,
For thanks to denazification,
She's a good Christian Democrat now.

Not only the boatmen decoying
With her songs and her spells and her comb,
Success she is also enjoying
In Washington, Strasbourg and Rome.

Her charms are decidedly hoary,
But her technique can never go wrong,
It is always the same old story
When she screeches her siren song.

The boatman whose doom she devises,
Not dreaming his end is nigh,
Goes down as his vessel capsizes,
Through the song of the Lorelei.

SAGITTARIUS

SMALLHOLDINGS

A FARM, in the abstract, is an area of land shaped and equipped for food-production. But farms do not exist in the abstract, they exist within a specified social framework, they were created by human agencies, their development has been controlled by human history. The farm, therefore, is a realisation of the will of man—and man is a surprisingly complex creature. In particular, he does not live by bread alone and he is by no means exclusively concerned with economic efficiency. Thus the farm is a social product as well as an economic creation, reflecting, as it were, something of the national stream-of-consciousness and the history of the Smallholdings Movement illustrates in interesting fashion some of the human needs, desires and purposes which have so influenced the development of our agriculture.

The origins of the movement, for instance, were in no direct sense agricultural. On the contrary, they were political and social in character, a by-product of the destruction of the Old English village community by the Enclosures of George III's time. For when the new wine of the Agricultural Revolution burst the old bottles of the Open Field System and the hated hedges spread over the farming landscape, the ancient land-occupying peasantry degenerated into a rural proletariat, deprived of productive property and entirely dependent on their miserable daily wages. And with poverty went insecurity; those in work lived near the borderline of hunger, those out of work had no reserves or resources save parish relief. This rural misery, the crushing poor rates it produced and the political danger it brought to the policeless countryside weighed heavily on the men of the later Eighteenth and early Nineteenth Centuries, indeed, it haunts the literature, otherwise so proud and confident, of the New Farming, and among the remedies proposed in such vast numbers and incoherent forms was this attempt, literally and worthily reactionary, to restore to the labourer something of what he had lost at the Enclosures.

Thus the Smallholdings Movement began as a response to the challenge of rural pauperism and in that highly localised age it took many and varied forms, with practice lagging far behind proposals. The main emphasis was on allotments, small plots which the labourer could till in his spare time, whereby supplementing his wages, improving his diet and regaining a little of his ancient responsibility and independence. This idea was developed in the interesting but ineffective Act of 1819 which empowered parish councils to lease or purchase land and let it out to unemployed farm-workers who could thus, in effect, grow their own poor rates. But some, notably Lord Suffield and his friend Bacon of the *Norwich Mercury*, thought in more drastic terms; they were prepared to settle unemployed labourers en masse as small independent farmers with the aid of parish loans and, if necessary, the compulsory purchase of waste land. The idea was prophetic, the effect nil. Suffield's foredoomed conversation with Melbourne, engagingly reported in Hammond's *Village Labourer*, is echoed in curious fashion by the copy of Bacon's pamphlet in the Bodleian; printed in 1831, it was uncut in 1949. So the original Smallholdings Movement did no more than decrease some of the immediate economic discomforts of the labourer's life. The allotment, not the true smallholding, was its achievement.

And then the towns came into the picture. Urban misery and unemployment continued what rural misery and unemployment had begun and the last fifty years of the Nineteenth Century saw various attempts to convert townsmen into small farmers. But here again more than economics was involved. For the grandchildren of the old peasantry chafed in the imprisoning towns of the Industrial Age and the ghosts of the Physiocrats and the ancient moralists walked abroad in their stifling and unhappy streets. The smallholding, therefore, was intended not merely to offer a livelihood to men for whom urban industry held no future, it was also to provide a life healthier, simpler and somehow morally *better* than that of the cities. All this was peculiarly and pathetically obvious in, for instance, the Manifesto of the National Land Company which Feargus O'Connor founded in 1847, but the technical dice were weighted against the transplanted factory-worker. In most cases, the neighbouring villagers waited cannily till the newly created smallholdings were vacant and then with local and professional knowledge behind them quietly and not unsuccessfully took them over. And this was symbolical, for the Movement was returning to the countryside.

For this there were several reasons. Firstly, low wages and bad times were combining to reduce the rural population and by the end of the Nineteenth Century labour in most districts had become scarce and was likely to get scarcer. Clearly, the traditional wage-packet was inadequate to keep men on the land. Secondly, there, had arisen an idea, vague but widespread, that a stable peasantry was a desirable class in society. Not so much because they were productively efficient, though this was often argued, but because their personal qualities rendered them a peculiarly valuable type of citizen. Thirdly, the labourer was now enfranchised and the political power of his vote rendered articulate his lingering land-

hunger, his desire for something better than a futureless life as a hired worker. Where Suffield had spoken as an individual, Arch and Collins could insist as leaders and representatives of a considerable body of opinion. Hence the Smallholdings Acts of 1892 and 1908 whose primary aim was not to draw men back from the towns but to keep them on the land by offering opportunities of advancement to the ambitious. The former Act was ineffective but the latter succeeded in establishing 13,000 smallholders of whom about 30 per cent were labourers, the others being mainly farmers' sons seeking a start or farmers seeking a larger acreage. There were few failures among these countrymen and the Act did a good job in a limited way. But very few of these settlers wished to buy their farms; they preferred tenancies and with their choice died the hopes of restoring the English peasantry.

But farming is not an autonomous industry and outside causes soon produced another change in policy. Firstly, there were the ex-Servicemen of 1918, often grown accustomed to an open-air life and dreaming of independence. 24,000 of these were established on smallholdings by an Act of 1919, not always happily despite generous, indeed partly non-economic, terms, and failures amounted to some 15 per cent for inexperience and the slump combined to take a considerable toll of the newcomers to the land. Secondly, in the '30s, urban unemployment revived the schemes of a century before, though in more thoughtful if less ambitious form and with better results. For instance, the Land Settlement Association, founded in 1934, insisted not merely on proper training but on centralised buying and selling on each of their estates. But here again the stimulus was not wholly economic. The demand for smallholdings was paralleled by a demand for allotments, particularly from the men who worked in the lifeless mines, which illustrated the enduring need of some connection with living and growing things, some link with the organic world of Nature, which industrial civilisation seems to sharpen rather than stifle.

So, by the later '30s, State action had established approximately 32,000 smallholders on a little over half-a-million acres. Physically, therefore, not more than 2 per cent of our total farmland had been remodelled and there was little numerical change in the rural population, for most of these smallholders came from the country in the first place. Economically, too, there was no very obvious increase in production, though there was a general swing from the traditional mixed farming to more specialised and intensive lines, from corn and meat to milk, eggs, vegetables and fruit. But socially the effects were important if limited. For the smallholding not merely provided a door into farming for those outside the industry who were willing to learn but lacked the capital to take over a large farm, it provided a ladder whereby the labourer could climb to independence and, possibly, to wealth. Further, though no exact evidence was possible, it was widely felt that the spirit and intense personal responsibility of the new smallholders added something of value to the life of the countryside. It was noticed, for instance, that village mothers preferred their girls to marry smallholders rather than labourers, for though there might be little difference in their physical standard of living both prospects and status were better.

Such is the background to the policy outlined in Part IV of the 1947 Agriculture Act and the recently published Report of the Smallholdings Advisory Council, accepted in general terms by the Government, on its detailed administration. Together they establish, in clear and practical form the future lines of development of the Smallholdings in this country. The governing principle is economic; "the provision of smallholdings should be determined primarily by agricultural considerations rather than, as in the past, by social considerations." Thus the smallholding must stand on its own commercial feet, it must be a productive unit capable of providing its occupier with a reasonable living and from this much follows logically. Firstly, the smallholding must be let to men with agricultural experience, for there is no place for the unskilled newcomer in so technical and exacting an industry as modern farming. Secondly, it will be the responsibility of the Smallholdings Authorities to help provide their tenants with the "invisible tools" they require in their work, notably technical advice, centralised services and co-operative buying and selling schemes.

Finally—and this old tradition now has a firm economic backing—preference in the choice of applicants is to be given to the farm worker, "for the Government believes that the agricultural industry will never provide a sufficiently attractive career unless further openings are made available to capable men who have the necessary experience." There is nothing particularly romantic in all this, for the days of the pamphlets and the battle-cries are over, but the unhappy ghosts who waited behind the chairs of the men who wrote the Report, the dispossessed peasant, the miserable mid-Victorian labourer, the indignant reformer and the disappointed philanthropist, could take comfort. Their work has not been in vain, their sufferings were not unheeded. Indeed, there is much truth in the saying that in England the pamphlets of the fathers are the statutes of the sons.

NIGEL HARVEY

CALEDONIAN MARKET

THE "dollars for Britain" slogan continues to make converts. It was invoked recently by one of the men who sell bracelets of three-penny-bits for G.I.s to take home to their girl-friends. He was fined for "using silver coin otherwise than as currency," and as he paid his fine to the court cashier he announced bitterly that, so far as he was concerned, the dollars-for-Britain campaign had had it. But the slogan has now reached the Caledonian Market—reached, that is to say, the four pubs on its corners, the grass-grown cobbles where its stalls used to stand, and the official stationery of the newly formed Caledonian Market Traders' Association, whose object is to induce the City Corporation to re-open the Market.

I went last week to the Association's inaugural meeting. It assembled, about 70 or 80 strong, in a small office in Davis Street, E., lent by an import agent who is going to advise it on "imports, and currency, and all that." Its members, most of whom hadn't seen each other since the stalls were ejected ten years ago, greeted one another with the demonstrative warmth that is so infectious to the stranger in their midst; some of the women were in tears. The purpose for which they were called together was explained by the chairman, Mr. Maurice Block—the kind of stall-holder who could always sell me anything and send me away happy and experienced—assisted by his wife, for whom I would return to buy more.

Before the war, he said, there were 1,400 stallholders in the market square on Tuesdays and Fridays. It was one of the sights of London. It was mentioned in *Baedeker*; foreign visitors made special trips to see it and spend their money on its antiques and curios. When the war came the official policy of discouraging crowds as bomb-targets led to its closure by the City Corporation who own and control the market square and buildings. Then it was requisitioned by the Government, who put up temporary buildings on it, made concrete ramps on it, and generally behaved as though the stall-holders were never to go back.

"We're going back," Mrs. Block told the assembled stall-holders. "It's three years since our part of the market was de-requisitioned. We shall start with a petition to the Lord Mayor. Then we shall go to the bar of the House of Commons. If need be, we shall go to his Majesty King George VI. We shall get that market re-opened. I don't know how we shall do it, but we shall." Hear, hear, said the stall-holders, who were standing shoulder to shoulder in the little room because there was nowhere to sit. They weren't being asked for money, said Mrs. Block, but her husband had hitherto borne the expense of the campaign and his pocket had limits. "I'll put five guineas," said a little man whom everyone seemed to know. "And me," shouted another. The Association had arrived.

The Corporation of London awaits its onslaught. From the Guildhall, the Clerk to the Metropolitan Cattle Markets Committee has been answering Mr. Block's entreaties with short letters of the kind that only half-conceal a policy of masterly inactivity. Food-rationing is still on, he points out. (Who says we want to sell food again? demands Mr. Block.) Restoring the square to its pre-war state would cost a lot of money. (Half of it's empty now, says Mr. Block—we could start business there to-morrow.) The matter will be kept under review and an announcement will be made in due course. (They've been saying that for three years, says Mr. Block. We've decided to act.)

Outside in Davis Street after the meeting a stallholder reminded me of the Government's promise to him when he was called up for war service. "They said I should get me job back," he said. "Every man was to get his job back. Right? Well, my job was selling cosmetics up the old Caledonian. Have I got me job back? I ain't," he said. "I'm a job-buyer now but I want me own stall again." A motherly looking lady told me she now stood in Brixton Market. "And they don't want me there," she said. "Besides, it ain't the same. I belong to the old Caledonian." A very tall, elderly and distinguished-looking gentleman who had stood silent and impressive at the meeting paused as he came out, on his way (you could have imagined) to the Athenaeum. "I stand in East Lane," he said in the voice of a Lord Chancellor. "Before the war I had a stall in Caledonian Market for thirty years. I regard this meeting as an excellent initiative. It has my support." We thanked him respectfully. At the meeting he hadn't spoken at all, but he made it seem, in retrospect, more formidable. The City Corporation must watch out.

A couple of days later I went to see what the market looks like now. The same eight-foot railings surround the vast cobbled square. The cattle market still goes on—Tuesdays and Fridays only. While I talked to a friendly policeman, a flock of about 200 sheep appeared along the road, followed by a licensed drover wearing the arm-badge supplied to him by the City Corporation and hounded into fluid order by a tireless little black dog. They had come from a local slaughterer's depot and were on their way to the market abattoir. As they passed a children's playground that used to be a part of the market,

a horde of little boys and girls rushed from the swings and roundabouts to help the drover and his dog by yelling at the terrified sheep. Islington infants, one supposes, are born to a world of mutton, not baa-lambs.

There are vast sheds containing rows of nude-looking bullock carcases on pulleys. Two or three acres of the square are occupied by brick-built Post Office premises, hastily put up during the war to house a bombed-out depot from Mount Pleasant; mail vans drive in and out ceaselessly. If I were a dispossessed stall-holder, those erections would look horribly permanent to me. Huge rusty iron sheds accommodate a brick company and a cable construction firm. In the centre of the square stands "Bank Building," a twelve-sided affair built in 1855 with a sixty-foot campanile that looks as derelict as the old Cloth Hall at Ypres. Bank Building contains the offices of the Market Superintendent, but it also housed at one time the various business needs of the market—bank, post office, forwarding agencies, café, and so on. And then there's the three- or four-acre corner which, the stall-holders claim, they could take over to-morrow—a desolate area of weed-grown cobbles defaced with empty tins and waste paper. There seems no obvious reason why the stalls should not be there. Many Londoners who knew the "junk market," which boasted that it sold anything from a pin to a pony (and certainly sold pins and ponies), would love to see its return. A visit to the Caledonian was a whole "afternoon out" to thousands. The stall-holders believe there's an ancient charter somewhere, and they propose to find and invoke it. What are the facts?

The Islington Cattle Market was established under a special statute promoted by the City Corporation in 1852. Its purpose (in which it failed) was to supersede Smithfield, then causing great annoyance in the City by reason of the great herds of cattle converging on the Newgate area through busy streets. Even then, Mr. Block would be interested but not surprised to learn, "the Corporation was in favour of letting things alone, but the public would have no more of it" (Hutching's *London Town Past and Present*, 1909). The cattle market was removed to Copenhagen Fields, Islington, and opened in 1868. Copenhagen Fields was a 75-acre site named after Coopen Hagen House, a Danish Inn opened here when the King of Denmark visited his brother James I (and was otherwise honoured by the dedication of some "King of Denmark" pubs). The rest of the site was preserved as an open space with a garden and drinking fountain in the centre; and "a feature of the market of growing usefulness to many of London's people," says *The Times* book on *The City of London* (1927), "is the general or pedlars' market held in the square on Tuesdays and Fridays." When that book was published, the number of stall-holders was 680 on Tuesdays and 1,800 on Fridays, the attendances of bargain-hunters being 25,000 and 80,000 respectively.

The stall-holders got themselves officially tolerated. Apparently there is no charter. But the right of holding a market or fair may be established by prescription, *i.e.*, by going on for a long time unhindered. "An uninterrupted modern user," says *Halsbury's Laws of England*, "raises a presumption in favour of prescription, rebuttable by evidence that the user arose within the time of legal memory." Street markets can establish themselves like this if they are left alone, which is one reason why the police like to keep their component units on the move. Almost everyone disapproves of this police policy except the people living in the roads to which the markets bring their crowds, noise, cabbage-leaves, and cartons. But the Caledonian? No one minds the Caledonian, behind its railings on the open square. It's a part of London, like the Tower, Eros, and the sad groups of people round the speakers in Hyde Park. Could we have the Caledonian back, please?

C. H. ROLPH

SO THEY SAY . . .

Looking the Other Way Again

Daily Herald, August 16:

99 BRITONS OUT OF 100 ARE ON THE JOB NOW

Employment . . . touched a new post-war record. . . . Unemployment hit a correspondingly low record . . . [announced] the Ministry of Labour last night.

Daily Express: . . . .

Daily Mail: . . . .

Delicacy . . .

Melbourne Herald, August 1:

Mr. Calwell, Minister of Immigration and Information, . . . slated the Communists as ". . . pathological exhibits . . . human scum . . . paranoiacs, degenerates, morons, bludgers . . . pack of dingoes . . . industrial outlaws and political lepers . . . ratbags . . . if these people went to Russia Stalin wouldn't even use them for manure." Mr. Caiwell to-day refused to make any further comment.

. . . and Deportment

Evening News, August 10:

Champion golfer Norman von Nida fought with a private detective when his wife caught him in the back of his car with a woman on the golf links in the early hours of the morning at Randwick, Sydney. . . . Mrs. von Nida started to belabour her husband with an umbrella. Von Nida ran across the links. . . .

Evening Standard, August 10:

". . . I hit my husband with an umbrella," [Mrs. von Nida] added. "He fought for possession of his trousers with the detective. He eventually got his trousers and ran off. . . ."

Inspired

Sunday Express, August 7:

SHOULD MONTY COME HOME?—BOTH THE FRENCH AND THE AMERICANS SAID TO BE OPPOSED TO HIM.

News of the World, August 7:

[These] rumours should be scotched and the whisperers scorned. They are Communist inspired. . . .

Two Nodding Homers

The Times, August 10:

OLD TESTAMENT FIND

We regret that the photograph of a fragment of a scroll bearing the text of the Book of Deuteronomy which appeared in *The Times* yesterday was printed upside down.

Daily Worker, August 8:

Apologies for . . . an inaccuracy regarding David Zaslavsky of *Pravda* . . . he is not [the editor of *Pravda*]. . . .

Visibility Poor

Daily Graphic, August 16:

Viewers also saw a bull . . . in the role of patient as Mr. Victor Milic demonstrated his appliance for holding open the mouth of an animal. . . .

Daily Express, August 16:

Viewers saw [the bull] drag demonstrator Leslie Hardern and farmer W. G. Fountain round and round the studio as they tried to open his mouth to show a new type of animal gag. . . .

Which Paper Does Tom Read?

Reynold's News, August 14:

Tom Driberg's Column: Drowsily, I picked up last Sunday morning's newspapers. A front-page headline caught my eye . . . "EGGS OFF THE RATION NEXT YEAR—M.P." I glanced down at the story—and sat up, stung to full consciousness . . . my indignant amazement grew . . . I knew I had said no such thing . . . I had said . . . milk, not eggs. . . .

Which Sunday newspaper had that precise, but apparently misinformed, headline? *Reynold's News*.

AUTOLYCUS

LETTERS FROM TWO ISLANDS

Isle of Britain.

. . . . In Bradford, where we are opening my new play. I breathe again the air of my childhood, and so, in spite of long hours and much work, I feel refreshed. My native city, which used to be an extraordinary mixture of cultured German Jews and the broadest Yorkshire types, of millionaires and pioneer Socialists, is not what it was. Not even to look at. And it is what is new that is all wrong, the wedding-cake cinemas, the gaudy chain stores, among the old black warehouses, which here, as in Manchester, have a sombre majesty of their own. The industrial North is beginning to look dangerously out-of-date, suggesting one of the grimmer early issues of the *Illustrated London News*; but I prefer the look and flavour of it to the cleaner and neater but somehow more idiotic life of the Light Industry areas that spread in Southern England between the wars, when everything began to look rather cheap, standardised, brittle and gutless. I have a deep affection for these dark ruins of Victorian industry and for the people who live in them, the stocky men who sound like comedians, the tight-lipped, sharp-eyed women, who are all so much more perceptive and sensitive than they pretend to be.

Yesterday here I bumped into a man, grey, stout, comfortable, who was a clerk with me in a wool office before 1914. He was the Good Clerk—he now controls the firm—who hurried away every evening to night school, there to learn Combing, Spinning, Commercial French and German. I was the Bad Clerk, who instead of completing sample lists would be peeping at Yeats' *Wind Among the Reeds* in my desk drawer (we sat on high stools like Dickens characters); and after one session at night school with the exile from Lille who taught Commercial French ("Translate, pliz—ze goods 'ave not gone by rilvay but by cannal") preferred the Empire and Palace music halls, where in the end I contrived to learn more than any night school could have taught me. So we went our different ways, each getting more or less what he wanted out of this life; and there we were, bumping into each other, two stout middle-aged buffers. Eyes and voices hardly seem to change before old age; and there was a moment when as I looked at his eyes and listened to him the last thirty-five years were no more than a dream; and we might have been on our way to label and wrap up fifty samples of Crossbred tops.

I may be all wrong but I have a notion—or a mere hunch, if you like—that if the folk in these parts were told plainly that our situation is grim and may well soon be much grimmer, they would straighten their broad shoulders and cry, "Nah, tha's talkin'!" I notice among them an uneasiness that I have not noticed in the South. Life around here has always been hard, whether

the people were getting the sheep on and off the moors or were working at their frames and looms; and that tradition is not yet dead. So if I were a major politician and had to decide where to make the big tough speech, I think I would make it not too far from these dark rocks and blackened warehouses.

Sneaking off to revisit for an hour one of the haunts of my childhood, Shipley Glen, I saw a notice outside a teahouse: *Full Meals This Door*. I had a vision of about one thousand, five hundred million people queuing up outside that door, then passing through it into some other and better world.

After talking to a lot of reporters again, I have been thinking about the popular Press. As you know, this large section of our Press has been accused lately of being too tendentious, the mouthpiece of its proprietors, or alternatively, of being too blatantly sensational. But I cannot help wondering if its chief fault is not a kind of routine frivolity, based on the idea that "human interest" is achieved by always deliberately making some rather silly approach to a topic. You meet an experienced reporter, who is probably himself a sensible and serious middle-aged man, quite capable of asking some intelligent questions. But these questions are really "off the record," chiefly there for his own satisfaction. The line he adopts professionally, for the paper's sake, is too often one that he knows quite well is almost idiotic. He himself does not want to know where you buy your ties or how many pipes you smoke, but he is convinced that something of that sort is what his readers want to know—or at least is what will be regarded in the editorial office as a possible "good story." Everybody concerned, it seems, has to assume that some vast invisible horde of nitwits has to be catered for, that we are clowning for their sake. Now I have always set to work with the conviction that roughly what interests me will interest a great many other people, that we are all more or less in the same boat. I detest this idea of cynical clowning for some mysterious mob, quite different from the men and women we meet every day. I shall be told that newspaper circulations prove that I am wrong, that what is wanted is the daily circus. But I am not convinced. What is overlooked in this argument, I feel, is the importance of layout, which in the papers with huge circulations is adroitly designed to attract and please simple folk, who do not read easily and are intimidated by the admirable severity of, let us say, *The Times* or *The Manchester Guardian*, which are clearly intended for well-educated men and women. But is it true that these simple readers must also have this "human interest" at all costs, that they are more interested in a popular writer's ties and pipes than in anything that happens in his head? If so, how did that writer achieve his popularity, for he certainly could not do it on his ties and pipes? And is it true that people in the mass are becoming sillier and sillier, that they must be idly amused as if they were tired children? And if it is, then what is the value of all these large claims for democracy, made by these very newspapers both in your country and mine? How can such people be expected to make decisions, among all the complicated problems of our time, when their favourite newspapers assume that they are incapable of reading more than a few hundred words of serious news and views? For my part, though I may over-estimate popular taste, I believe that many of our editors overdo this determined frivolity, that they are too fixed in a dubious tradition.

Another weakness is the notion that the best news is always bad news, that a quarrel deserves more attention than a reconciliation, that hostile criticism should be given far more space than any compliments. I used to suffer badly from this tradition in America. I would be asked for my opinions, which would be as well-balanced and just as I could make them, and then, time after time, to my horror, would discover that all the pleasant things I had said about American life and character had been cut out of the interview, which apparently consisted of a number of savage attacks upon the manners and habits of my hosts. Once in Boston a young man who should have been writing fiction and not interviews invented about a thousand words of careful insult, and the fact that this interview appeared to have been given by an American, using characteristic slang, rather than by an Englishman, did not prevent many of these astonishing phrases from being quoted right across the continent. This mischievous trick is more frequent on your side of the Atlantic than it is on ours, but there is quite enough of it here.

Just before coming up here, I saw *Death of a Salesman*, which arrived after immense preliminary ballyhoo. The play is certainly worth seeing, but I could not discover in the construction and writing, the acting, or the production, which seemed to me clumsy, any of the distinction I had been led to expect. But it is only fair to the author to suggest that Paul Muni, an admirable character actor in the Central European tradition, is badly miscast as the chief figure, who should be a bouncing, bluffing, half-comic and half-pathetic American type, a huge aged adolescent. Acting his head off, Muni keeps one interested, but I never found him genuinely moving. But there may be a difference of theatrical method here. I always take the view myself that if characters on the stage are too obviously sorry for themselves, as some of these characters are, then the audience will tend to withdraw and not advance its sympathy. (But I refer here only to English audiences.) Chesterton once wisely observed that Dickens made the mistake of trying to make pathos as expansive as humour. (And it succeeded with the Victorians but does not succeed with us; chiefly, I suspect, because being tougher inside, far more confident about life, they liked to work themselves up, and be worked up by their writers, to a good cry, assisted by gin and brandy.) So I always tell my actors to expand and exaggerate and generally over-emphasize comic statements, but to deliver pathetic lines dryly and astringently, without any suggestion of self-pity. Whereas, with all the goodwill in the world, I found myself staring coldly at these weeping males in the salesman's tragedy. Too much shouting and cursing, too many tears, for our emotional climate, for the low lights and vast dim understatements of London.

J. B. PRIESTLEY.

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

(From "The New Statesman," August, 1924)

Unheeded Warning

. . . The immediate danger is the control of the Government by the German Nationalist Party which, if it continued, would mean the restoration of the old militarist regime in all its essentials, even if the form of the Republic and constitutional methods were temporarily maintained. The danger would be much smaller but for the docility of the German people. That the workmen at any rate are becoming less docile is certain, but it is impossible to say how far the change has yet gone or what would be its practical outcome in the event of an open attack on the Republic. Unfortunately the workmen are badly led, are more and more losing confidence in their leaders, and—what is worst of all—are not united.

The Arts and Entertainment

THE NEW SHAW

WAS it, one wondered, as one chuckled through *Buoyant Billions* at Malvern last week—was it a piece of typical Shavian strategy to allow an earlier version of the play to be done in Switzerland and adverse reports and rumours to float back just in order to give us what Mr. Shaw so enjoys giving us, a shock of surprise in the upshot? "Negligible," "bad," "senile," even, were the epithets that rumour had introduced. In fact, Mr. Shaw's latest—it is altogether premature to say his last—play is very far from senile. Certainly it is small-scale, light weight, not quite even full length. In the Shaw canon it will eventually find a place in the tail no doubt. But Mr. Shaw can still take the sluggish muddled creatures we call our minds out for a good airing and bring them back with their livers shaken up and the blood flowing briskly round the circulatory system.

Buoyant Billions provides us with a fresh, light, even rather gay-hearted, evening in the Shaw late manner. It is not, that is to say, a closely constructed play proceeding in some particular direction. Rather, it is a peripatetic ramble round the contemporary scene conducted in a fair approximation to the author's characteristically springy gait and slightly more erratic than ever in the sudden changes of direction. Yet in these later plays the conduct is not, it turns out, so utterly erratic as it seems at first. The fantastic fables have a nicely surprising way of drawing together the separate threads in the middle. Thus, in this play, we start off Act I with a father asking his son what career he proposes to adopt. The young man is quite decided. He proposes to become a "world betterer." This leads to a long discussion of the opportunities for such a profession in the world to-day, the father being somewhat sceptical, the son robustly optimistic. (As an example, when the father suggests that when everyone has the atomic bomb, they will simply blow up the world, the son replies, But why should they? They haven't in the past: "I can go to the nearest oil shop and for less than a shilling buy enough chemical salts to blow this house and all its inhabitants to smithereens. A glass retort, a pestle and mortar and a wash-bottle are all I need to do the trick. But I don't do it.") Twenty minutes' dialogue and the act ends with the young man being given a cheque to go round the world on a tour of investigation.

Act II: Panama; where She is living in a hut built with her own hands looked after by a native servant who thinks her a holy woman, partly because she tames alligators and snakes by playing on the saxophone. Presently arrives our young world betterer in pursuit of her. But all the change he gets is a long conversation on Oxford and religion with the native servant, an intelligent fellow, who was born into a religion presided over by a deity called (I think) Hootchipoolie and a devil called Pootchihoolie ("Pink men," the native remarks to him, "when they find that their beliefs are only half true reject both halves. We coloured men are more considerate.") So far the threads have been brightly enough coloured but they have remained rather bewilderingly separate.

The excellent third Act draws them together. The scene, according to the programme, is in a drawing room in Belgrave Square. But when the curtain rises we find ourselves in a Chinese temple. It is the spiritual refreshment room of Bill Buoyant, Billionaire, and it is presided over by a Chinese priest (the family solicitor asks this official with some surprise why Bill Buoyant should have left the Church of England, only to have to listen every day to a service conducted in a language he doesn't know a word of. "In the Church of England," replies the Priest, "he

understood too much.") But soon enough we are confronted by that spectacle familiar to Shaw audiences, the half-circle of chairs that promises a *conversazione*. It is a family conference—Bill Buoyant's family, individualists of one kind and another, summoned to learn from the solicitor that at their father's death they will all be penniless. Before they have had time to digest the full implications of this (being a rich man's children they have never learned to "do anything") in sweeps the She from Panama who turns out to be Bill Buoyant's eldest daughter. She is in flight from a terrible danger—the danger of falling in love with that young world betterer. But her flight is in vain. Hardly has she explained her position to the family when he himself forces his way in and demands that she marry him at once. Obligingly the family conference switches its deliberations to consider this new problem: Shall she? or shall she not? The dénouement, worked along familiar Shavian lines of Girl gets Boy, comes in the fourth act.

Along the familiar Shavian lines. Yes, there are no particular novelties here. The Shavian strategy is by now well known. The shock tactics no longer shock: we can often see the paradoxes coming ahead. And, of course, there is no lesson, no solution, no message. Message-seeking is one of our native vices and it has often ruined our enjoyment of the plays: "All the same I don't quite see what he's *getting at*." But for a long time—perhaps longer than is generally recognised—he hasn't been "getting at" anything. Or rather, all he is getting at is our flabby minds, as a masseur gets at flabby bodies to tone up the muscle and the fibres: and that toning up is the experience, the pleasure. Shaw is our mental masseur. We come out of a Shaw play as we come out of a gymnasium or a swimming bath, stimulated and glowing. No need to ask the water what it's been trying to teach us.

The gallant Malvern company put over the play with zest and obvious enjoyment. And a certain pride, too. The average contemporary play offers so few words that really matter in themselves that our actors are very much out of practice in the arts of speaking. So this company are always audible and clear, but they will get many more laughs when they have perfected their phrasing and their timing. Miss Frances Day, as might be expected, is least at home with subtleties of speech rhythm: but she almost compensates by one bold theatrical moment when she confesses to the family circle the delicious danger she finds herself in. Mr. Denholm Elliott has to switch awkwardly from the serious world-betterer of the first Act to the typical Shaw anti-romantic young man in the other three. To this he brings a stylish arrogance and assurance. And clearly evident throughout the evening in a play not always easy to hold together is the controlling experience and imagination of Mr. Esmé Percy, who produces.

T. C. WORSLEY

PROMS

THE list of novelties at this year's Proms is not a long one: during the eight weeks only eleven pieces. Is it a delusion that Sir Henry Wood used to extend a wider hospitality to the young and obscure, just as he gave to dozens of unknown executants their first big chance? In both respects the B.B.C. is inclined to play for safety. It is true that Sir Henry's novelties included plenty of duds, but what of that? The duds vanished, the valuable survived, the promising learnt from the experience, and the audiences took it all in their stride. It would be a pity if the Proms were to lose that free-for-all experimental informality which used to be one of the characteristics which distinguished them from sterner and more strenuous winter symphony concerts. "Summertime and the livin' is easy": the audience, with bare legs and open necks, are well in the tradition, but the programmes have grown almost too stiff, too thickly studded with unimpeachable masterpieces. The other day one of my colleagues felt obliged to pull a long face about the inclusion of Dohnanyi's *Suite in F sharp minor*, a piece of light music which distilled a delectable aroma of pre-1914 happiness: the very thing for a hot night. Among the accepted but unperformed orchestral works with which B.B.C. desks are said to bulge, may there not be some which would rub shoulders happily enough with Dohnanyi or Suppé or Auber, though they might be put out of countenance by Beethoven and Brahms? What we too often get now is an indigestible wodge of Overture, Concerto and Symphony, all by the same Big B (so handy for the Home Programme, all before the nine o'clock news); followed by the interval; followed by something new smuggled in, as though under protest, where it will do least damage. Worse still, not one of the first five novelties has been broadcast, not even by the Third Programme.

Of last week's under-the-counter, after-the-interval novelties, one was by Alan Rawsthorne and the other by William Alwyn. Alwyn's Concerto for oboe accompanied by strings and harp, well played by Evelyn Rothwell and the L.S.O. under Basil Cameron, is playful, picturesque, and—despite the programme analyst's disclaimer—pastoral in mood; the kind of music which gives considerable pleasure although one can see its value to be local and ephemeral. Without pretending to depth or marked originality, the little work punted itself along a familiar reach of English scenery with an easy, spontaneous grace; the workmanship was full of happy touches, particularly the management of the final pages. William Alwyn is not such a master of the lighter forms as Lennox Berkeley (whose entrancing Serenade for Strings would make an ideal Prom piece), because his style is much less distinguished; but he has something of Berkeley's flow, and tender, unforced sentiment.

These characteristics were not prominent in Alan Rawsthorne's new Concerto for Strings. Fine workmanship we have come to take for granted in Rawsthorne's scores; and this concerto is no exception, with its clear structure, logical harmony and effective use of strands of solo string tone against the tutti, like tendrils trailing across a hedge. All the same, I can't help feeling in this piece a want of spontaneity, an air of excessive caution. For the slow movement the composer has had recourse again to his favourite chaconne rhythm and form but this time the music shows a tendency, at the end of each section of the design, to come to a full stop. The finale begins with a quiet subject of considerable charm, reminiscent of a theme from Tippett's Double Concerto, followed by the regulation fugato: all quite satisfactory and enjoyable in an intellectual way, but the listener remains unmoved because the composer seems on this occasion to be not singing out of his heart, as in the lovely first movement of his violin concerto, but consciously constructing. It must be allowed, however, that Rawsthorne's emotional reserve acquired an added value from the juxtaposition of Bax's Fourth Symphony, with its rhapsodic luxuriance and all too careless raptures; just as the delicacy of Alwyn's concerto was enhanced by the boisterous scoring, happy-go-lucky style of Moeran's Serenade, which followed it.

DESMOND SHAWE-TAYLOR

THE MOVIES

"Winter Meeting," at the Carlton
"A Song is Born," at the Marble Arch Pavilion

EMBLEMATIC of the season, on those impassioned hoardings and murals that haunt the London waste plots, there is a picture of Miss Lizabeth Scott with her hand up to stifle a jaw-cracking yawn. "Terrific," says the superimposed label. Miss Scott has been thus many weeks, though her film came and went in a flash; and the yawn started, I believe, as a daybreak of terror. Either she had just murdered someone (a title *Too Late!* seems to float into my head), or someone was about to murder her. But you can't keep that up through August. The cats and the spaghetti tins, the willow-herb that has ceased to be purple, the jaded regard of the passer-by reduce all to their level. Somnambulating on the shady side, we yawn back. With or without the lady's encouragement film critics have been conspicuous in London this week by the size and depth of their yawns.

Not, of course (to pick paths through accumulated tedium), that one would openly bare the mouth to Miss Bette Davis; she, if anyone, can swell a novelette, and *Winter Meeting* seems rather more than that. Here is her spinster role—fortyish and, at moments, how!—but not in its extremities of goggles and tippet. She doesn't have to be psycho-analysed back to herself; she doesn't, except incidentally, kick about in trousers. No, her looks are her own, smart restaurants open their doors and melt bowing before her, she has just published a selection of pebbly verse, and has a nice job at a publisher's which leaves her with time to enjoy to the full the first love affair of her life. This concerns, surprisingly, a dour-looking war hero (James Davis) whose photograph decorates all the front pages, and who takes to dropping in and sleeping in a chair. A bad habit of his, he says, but I don't know; it works, and that lowering half-asleep look obviously has charms. Deep is calling to deep. But then one day he wakes up and (in the technical sense) walks out. What! Why? They get together again in the country (prettily snow-bound) to find out why. His explanation is that he has always wanted to be a priest, and this is somehow mixed with his heroic exploits on the seas in ways which not even the accompanying music of Max Steiner can make transparent. And Miss Davis delves into *her* past, which involves a father who had occupied the very chair she is sitting in, and had gone mad, and—and—— Here (I have the appalling confession to make) I slept a very little myself, just long enough for me to miss the explanation, though if hers was no better than his I didn't miss much. Anyhow, he likes feeling that he's a pretty fair cad, and perhaps really she likes it too, because she is never more at home than in that last tear-stained tableau at the window, with a little pebble forming somewhere for the next volume.

I think I may not have been quite fair to *Winter Meeting*: its talk, which goes on and on, and its sultriness, got the better of me. It is ably directed and well (in Miss Davis's case very well) acted. But I doubt if even her wildest fans will treasure memories of it.

A Song is Born achieves the dubious distinction of starring Danny Kaye and preventing him, except at moments, from being funny. One soprano giggle during a serious speech, when his back is surreptitiously tickled, makes the audience long for more. He is allowed a twitch here, a nod there, and for three whole minutes to amuse with a love-lunatic breakfast. Otherwise he pads round in Technicolor loving Miss Virginia Mayo and discovering the Jazz Kings, some of whom (Louis Armstrong, for example), with their instruments on tap, are more photo-active than others.

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

RADIO NOTES

THE unsupported human voice echoes more agreeably in my memory than anything else of last week. Pride of place must be given to the talk by Professor Gilbert Murray, *Myself When Young*. It was charming, touching, pleasant in style and manner. The experience of listening to such a talk is quite different from that of reading it in *The Listener*. The ear weighs words, it is the eye which is careless and bumptious. The ear does not spurn commonplaces as the eye does; it relates them to a voice, the voice to a person, and the relationship creates a value, for which either admiration or distaste may be felt. A further pleasure of the voice is surprise. Having at various times heard mention of Lt.-Col. F. Spencer Chapman, D.S.O., who fought in Burma and wrote *The Jungle Is Neutral*, I don't quite know what sort of voice I would have connected with him; something gruff and soldierly, certainly not the alto tenor which travelled forth during his

talk on *The Ascent of the Fluted Peak* (a Himalayan mountain of 20,000 feet). This, also, was a very good fifteen minutes, concise, modest, and botanically vivid. The lyricism of the mountaineer emerged well.

Apropos of talks, one must not forget that wonderful professional amateur, Wilfred Pickles who went on a long Lancastrian walk, down the Vale of Lune, for the benefit of *Children's Hour*. Sound sentimentalist at heart, Pickles turned his walk into a nursery pageant of English history, passing places of battles and churches with memorable tombs. But he never loses respect for his subject, whether it be a romantic castle at sunset, an old lady, or a trout-stream; and this hour's stroll, filled out with talk of people met on the way, was full of variety and charm. Children have been well cared for lately, the Light Programme having provided a special 12 a.m. feature, for the summer holidays, under the title *Hullo, Children!* Edited by Lionel Gamlin, it has been consistently intelligent and interesting. A "Shakespearean Holiday," for which James Pestridge took two Midland children on a tour in Stratford-on-Avon, was particularly well managed, except for a tiresome guffawing performance of the Pyramus and Thisbe episode from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Assuming that children are not out on the beach at noon, would they anyhow care to interest themselves in the old-fashioned adventures of Jules Verne's *Around the World in Eighty Days*? Having doubted this, I must confess that I found the serial instalments, prepared by Denis Carey, exciting and enjoyable. They are robust, fast, clearly and well acted; no trouble has been spared with effects, and the typhoon made one almost seasick.

Grown-ups on holiday will perhaps have enjoyed a new comedy programme, *Petticoat Lane*, now going into its fourth week. Produced by Pat Dixon, it takes forty-five minutes of Home Service time on Friday evenings, and I have found myself looking forward to it. Basically, this is a good idea, which takes songs and gags (including bad ones) in its stride, and spreads bustle and confidence. The feature accompanies itself with an air of success, which is bracing. The confused background noises are better than they usually are. If the third week showed a slight falling-off, I think that may be because Mr. Dixon has not realised that he can safely tune the pitch down a little, now that we have got the hang of the thing. Also I don't believe that political jokes, e.g., "'How to get blood from a stone,' by Stafford Cripps," are at all in the spirit of Petticoat Lane. The programme owes much to the disgusted genius of the many-voiced Max Wall.

The Critics, having mauled *Ann Veronica*, and provoked much anguish thereby, the B.B.C. has made handsome amends by a full-dress production of this play, "the London stage success," as they respectfully call it. So with respect one listened, and that chilly emotion was never heated into anything more restorative; though sometimes the loaded naivety of Wendy Hiller blew sparks from these academic embers.

MARK OGILVIE

"Faust," at the Open Air Theatre, Regents Park

Had Stephen Phillips' *Ulysses* been revived one might have gone to it in the same spirit of apprehension as one went to this new production of *Faust*; a fear of mustiness, a suspicion of impending boredom, which was not lessened by the opening chorus of chanting archangels, who appeared to have spent their entire lives at the B.B.C. Then the translation, one expected, would be literary, Goethe would be permanently in the wings, or whatever, at Regents Park, is the equivalent. But surprisingly, after a sticky opening, the literariness went and the translators showed themselves to have a sense of theatre, and a manner of sounding as if they were writing their own rather old-fashioned verse rather than translating another's. This is a virtue in the translation of a verse play, and Messrs. Rawson are to be congratulated on a sensible attempt at an impossible task. It is rather sad to reflect that England has produced no translator of the genius of Tieck, in whose translation Shakespeare is rarely in the wings. Mr. Anthony Eustrel's Mephistopheles had great charm and sparkle, and when he was on the stage there was no boredom. It is a good, juicy part, with opportunities for wit, rhetoric and knockabout; but the poor melancholy Doctor cannot be saved even by the fine voice and presence of Mr. Richard Ainley. He is a bore, and whether he goes to heaven, hell or purgatory is no concern of ours. All the same, there is satisfaction in having seen a reasonable production of an inaccessible masterpiece.

A Summer Exhibition

At *Roland, Browse and Delbanco's* a collection of English and French paintings contains not a few things of rare distinction. Best of all are *Reclining Nude* by Braque and *Paris Street Scene* by Bonnard. The Braque is not a large picture yet it has majestic calm and strength: its *muted* greens and browns are exquisitely sure—they exemplify that controlled excitement, or emotion, which is perhaps the most characteristic single feature of this great painter's work. The Bonnard is quite square, and the frontal view of houses across the street is broken into only by one thick, upright window frame, rich with the grooves of vertical moulding. It is perhaps a misfortune that the frame of the picture is almost identical in width and moulding with this upright pillar of golden brown on the canvas. Other fine things in the ground floor room are Vuillard's *Flowers on the Mantelpiece*; a small landscape, with a most exquisite sky, by Jongkind called *Shepherd and Sheep*; and an excellent Rodin line drawing, *Seated Nude*. Does Rodin's line drawing make that of Picasso and Matisse seem too much concerned with style? Rodin's scribbled outlines and "inlines" evoke form with a degree of economy surpassed by none. The most interesting English painting (on the first floor) is Colquhoun's large work of four years ago, *The Whistle Seller*. This picture, a very good picture indeed, full of excellent colour and delightful texture, makes all his work of the last two years look by comparison hasty, crude and forced. In this sense it is an eye-opener. Prunella Clough's patient *The Breakwater*, though full of competence, is somehow too coldly calm to move us as it should.

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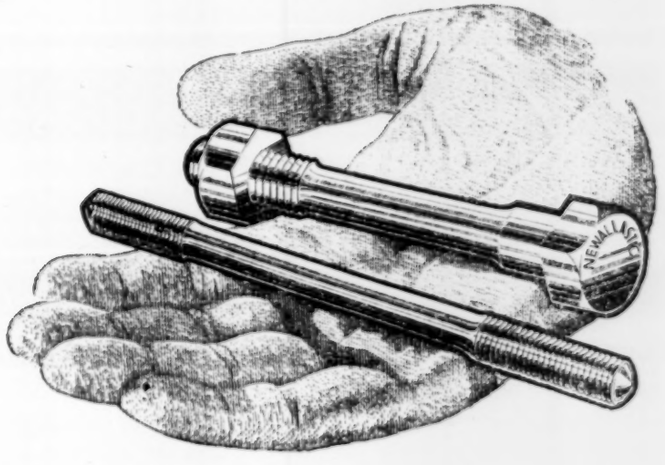

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Correspondence

THE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

SIR,—Whatever defects my proposals for Public School reform may have had, they certainly justified themselves by provoking a very lively correspondence.

Broadly speaking, the critics were divided into four groups :

(A) Those who argued that anyone is entitled, if he pays for it, to get any education he likes for his children, and that only a totalitarian will seek to limit this liberty. Conclusion : Nothing need be done.

(B) Those who believe that multilateralism is the panacea for all educational evils and that, if enough multilateral schools are built, the Public Schools and prep. schools will peacefully wither away. Conclusion : Nothing need be done beyond the Government's present policy.

(C) Those who argue that Public School education is shocking anyway, and that the Government should not waste public funds providing free places in them. Conclusion : Nothing need be done, except wait for the process of illumination which will persuade everyone that Public Schools are bad.

(D) Those who agree with the idea that equality of opportunity should be realised in what is now the privileged system of education, but doubt whether any way could be found of allotting free places at Public Schools otherwise than by scholarships based on competitive examination. Conclusion : Something must be done, but heaven knows how.

I cannot accept the ultra-*laissez-faire* attitude of Group A. Years ago we decided to break into the Grammar Schools, and we have achieved either 100 per cent. or at least a large proportion of free places. Why, then, should we shrink from applying the same principle to the Public Schools, the next rung on the ladder of educational snobbery ?

As for Group B, I can only repeat that the facts are all against them, and so is human nature. There is no evidence that privileged education will wither away as the quality and quantity of State schools improve. On the contrary, everything goes to show that, in a class-conscious country like ours, so long as a private, privileged system of education exists, people of all classes will struggle to send their children there. This is not, as some correspondents have argued, a middle-class vice. The working man who sends his son to the little private day school, so that he can meet nice children and get a nice accent, has the self-same motive as the Labour M.P. who sends his boy to a Public School.

Group C is equally blind to facts. It is really ridiculous in 1949 to dismiss Public School education as valueless. There are a few—very few—Grammar Schools whose intellectual education equals that of the dozen best Public Schools, which are the key-stone to the arch of educational privilege. But day schools inevitably lack the qualities of education which a boarding school can give. No one suggests that every middle-class boy is suited by a boarding school. But I believe that boarding school suits a lot of boys in every class, and I should like to see the Public Schools open to all who can benefit from them.

Group D. I cannot believe that a written scholarship exam. is the only way of selecting between the applicants for my proposed free places in the Public Schools. I mentioned in my article that the selection of boys for Dartmouth had shown there were other methods, as well as " officer selection " during the war. I admit the problem is difficult and would need the most careful study by specialists before any scheme were worked out.

Finally, I would remark that none of the correspondents effectively challenged my central thesis that the privileged educational system, as it stands, is indefensible in a social democracy ; that privileged education is actually increasing under a Labour Government ; and that, if the present policy continues, it will continue to increase.

House of Commons. R. H. S. CROSSMAN

PARIS POLICE

SIR,—In view of Robert Payne's article and the subsequent correspondence on the behaviour of the Paris police, I was an interested observer of the recent demonstrations against the American chiefs-of-staff in the Place de la Concorde. The authorities had more than ample forces, ranging from thousands of *gardes mobiles* in battle order and mounted troops discreetly hidden in the Champs Elysées' trees to light armoured cars and a spotting plane circling overhead. Another 1848 seemed to be anticipated rather than the good-humoured, loosely knit crowd which moved about in one section of the Concorde singing the *Marseillaise* and shouting such slogans as " Nous voulons la paix " and " Bradley à New York." The demonstrators were out-numbered by at least three to one.

That did not prevent the police from behaving in a similar manner to that described by Mr. Payne. One police officer in command was well-nigh hysterical and shouted threats and abuse at the crowd. At the entrance to the Rue de Rivoli his men applied their batons freely and began quite indiscriminate arrests. The technique was to drive a police van into the crowd, and then to seize, baton, assault and thrust into the van the nearest people at hand. The police appeared to want to provoke the crowd so that they could arrest even more (next morning's press said there were 80-100 arrests, a large proportion of a moderate-sized crowd).

Particularly instructive was the obvious hostility of the police to the press. A cameraman standing next to me tried to secure a picture of a man being frog-marched to the police van. A policeman aimed a kick at his camera and made as if to arrest him. When the expostulating press man pointed to his large press badge the *agent* shouted " *Je me fous de la presse.*" Later an English visitor who took a picture of the crowd was angrily asked by a police officer if he was " *autorisé.*" Clearly the police knew that their behaviour if portrayed might not be popular. As the crowd was pushed for half a mile down the Rue de Rivoli, baton charges and arrests were constantly being made, *pour encourager les autres.*

For the police it was a famous victory. If the scale of preparations seemed to suggest a certain lack of confidence in their peaceful powers, or perhaps represented an official estimate of the unpopularity of the distinguished American visitors, the unnecessary violence was not calculated to impress the many foreign visitors, often involuntarily caught up in the affray. EDMUND PENNING-ROWSELL

190 Russell Court, W.C.1.

CANADIAN SOCIALISTS

SIR,—I hope it is not too late to comment on the article in your July 9th issue entitled "Liberal Canada," in which an unnamed author reported on the recent general elections in Canada. The impression left by the article, in respect of the C.C.F. Party at least, would be entirely erroneous. The drop in C.C.F. representation at Ottawa (which was, by the way, from 32 to 13 and not from 28 to 10 as stated) has never at any time been attributed by the C.C.F. to " the dissident group in British Columbia." We attribute the decline, which was very small in popular vote, to such factors as the general condition of prosperity in the country, the continuous press campaign against Socialism (strengthened now by examples drawn from what is said to be English experience), the adoption of many C.C.F. proposals by the Liberal Government, but above all to the skilful way in which the Liberal Party played upon the fear of a Tory revival to attract votes to itself as the only party able to defeat Mr. Drew. The voters rejected Conservatism in a decisive manner ; unfortunately the electorate is still captivated by the old two-party system which ensures that the interests of capitalism are safe no matter who wins.

The " rebels " in British Columbia may have done the party some harm by refusing to endorse the Atlantic Pact, but since the overwhelming majority of the party, including the National Council and Executive, supports the Pact this defection carried little weight. Your correspondent's assertion that " A purge of all the rebels might leave the party consisting of little but its National Executive " is as fantastic as the other statement that " There are many voices calling for the party to return to its advocacy of Socialism." There is no large dissident group anywhere in the C.C.F., and the party has never abandoned

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its advocacy of Socialism. Of course, if the writer of your article considers, as I am led to suspect, that support of the Pact is a betrayal of Socialism, then further argument is fruitless. The fact of the matter is that the C.C.F. first term programme of nationalisation of the C.P.R., the commercial banks, basic steel, meat packing and fertilizers, together with its advocacy of overall economic planning, is still radical for the great majority of Canadians at this time—particularly when Socialist experiments in Europe are meeting difficulties which the local press exploits to the utmost. This fact makes nonsense of your correspondent's remark that "most voters saw little difference between the C.C.F. and the Liberals." In many parts of Canada the C.C.F. is looked upon as something almost akin to Communism. The objective situation in Canada is not yet ripe for a widespread Socialist movement; there are many who think a change will not be long in coming.

F. R. SCOTT
National Chairman.

Co-operative Commonwealth Federation,
Ottawa.

ELECTED SILENCE

SIR,—I read all reviews of "Thomas Merton's" *Elected Silence* very eagerly and seldom fail to learn something interesting about my contemporaries. But I am baffled by Mr. Pritchett.

At first glance his review seems a simple case of a journalist dealing adroitly with an unfamiliar subject. He has the prevalent distaste for Americans. (It is interesting to observe the stages by which in recent years the mild derision of an ancient civilisation for the *parvenu* has been transformed into the rancour of the under-dog snarling at its benefactor). *Elected Silence* is typically American. That is good for several paragraphs. The subject is the author's transactions with God. The reviewer, it at first appears, knows nothing of God. The transactions must therefore be explained in psychological terms. Enough for a column or two there. For the infidel the *Confessions* of St. Augustine must be the record of an aberration. But they are in *Everyman's Library*, therefore a classic, therefore not lightly to be used in comparison with modern work. That allows for a few sneers at the publisher and editor. The article is complete.

All this is quite straightforward and expected. But towards the end Mr. Pritchett describes himself as a "Protestant." Unless he is using the word in a painfully pedantic sense and misappropriating the initial capital letter, he should mean that he adheres to one of the Christian sects that sprang from the Reformation in the sixteenth century. The least he can mean is that he believes in the existence of God, the truth of the Bible and the reality of prayer.

What, then, is his article about? Here is a young American who claims to recognise God as the conscious end of his being and to be devoting his life to prayer. The scheme of the book is to trace through a noisy and naive adolescence the recurring hints given him by God; hints which eventually became his vocation. A genuine Protestant would say that, though God does call people to a life of prayer, the sacramental system and the discipline which "Merton" has accepted are an imposture. A conscientious reviewer would at least try to explain what "Merton" means by "Grace" and "Prayer." Instead of this we are told that "Merton" has an "abnormal resentment against his mother . . . for defrauding him of an emotion"

Can you at all conceive how ridiculous this seems to a Christian?

EVELYN WAUGH

THE PEAK AND THE LAKES

SIR,—The Ramblers' Association has not accepted the Ministerial views on the Calgarth Factory and the Hope Valley Cement Works, as Dr. C. E. M. Joad suggested in his letter of August 5. Evidence was given on our behalf at the public inquiry on the proposed development of the cement works and, at our Annual Council, a resolution deploring the Minister's decision was carried unanimously.

The original purpose of the annual Ramblers' Rally at Castleton was to demand access to mountains, and it is only of recent years, with legislation in prospect, that National Parks and Footpaths have been dealt with. This year, having been informed that a request would be favourably considered, the Association invited Mr. Silkin to give an exposition of the National Parks Bill.

A few hours before the Rally the Minister intimated that he was not prepared to discuss the cement works decision. He explained that he had made that decision in a quasi-judicial capacity under the provisions of the Town & Country Planning Act, 1947, and had answered for his action to Parliament. There was, he pointed out, no provision for further appeal and therefore no useful purpose could be served by raising the matter at the Rally. My committee saw no alternative but to agree with this contention.

The Ramblers' Association has lost none of its militancy, as Mr. Silkin could testify. It has consistently and vigorously pressed for amendments to the National Parks Bill and has had the satisfaction of seeing the sections dealing with Footpaths and Access considerably strengthened as a result of these representations.

While we still deplore the permitted extension of the Hope Cement Works, we consider that no useful purpose can be served by further lamentation over a lost battle. Our concern is to see that we do not meet similar defeat in the future, and that neither the Peak nor any other National Park shall suffer a like disfigurement.

GEORGE R. MITCHELL
The Ramblers' Association,
20 Buckingham Street,
London, W.C.2.

SOCIALIST TECHNICIANS

SIR,—A little while ago I put forward publicly the suggestion that there should be formed a Society of Socialist Managers and Technicians, to be affiliated to the Labour Party, and to provide a meeting ground for Socialists engaged in commerce and industry at executive level. Such a society could do a great deal of useful work in thinking out the problems of industry in a planned mixed economy, and in keeping the Labour Party and the Government informed on industrial matters.

I have already received letters from a large number of people anxious to join this Society, and I am convening a meeting of them at some central point at the beginning of October. I should be pleased to hear from any NEW STATESMAN AND NATION readers who are managers and technicians and also Socialists, and who would like to participate in setting up this Society.

IAN MIKARDO.
House of Commons.

IRISH FAMINE

SIR,—Mrs. Hawkes, in her review of Dr. Salaman's book about the potato, repeats the usual statement that the Irish famine of 1845-47 was due to the potato blight. The following paragraph from James Connolly's *Labour in Irish History* suggests that the capitalist system, rather than the blight, was responsible for the famine: "The staple food of the Irish peasantry was the potato; all other agricultural produce, grains and cattle, was sold to pay the landlord's rent. The ordinary value of the potato crop was yearly approximately twenty million pounds in English money; in 1848, in the midst of the famine, the value of agricultural produce in Ireland was £44,958,120. In that year the entire potato crop was a failure, and to that fact the famine is placidly attributed, yet those figures prove that there was food enough in the country to feed double the population were the laws of capitalist society set aside, and human rights elevated to their proper position." It is a common saying amongst Irish Nationalists that "Providence sent the potato blight but England made the famine." The statement is true, and only needs amending by adding that "England made the famine by a rigid application of the economic principles that lie at the base of capitalist society."

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

"My 23rd Birthday. Nooned at a mud puddle." So Parkman noted in his journal* in 1846 and we shall look far for any comparable passage in the diaries of a creative artist. Certainly the wind has never played quite so freely at a historian's birth. The smell of documents, the hard feel of the desk chair, are singularly absent. Parkman had already ridden for three weeks on the arduous and dangerous Oregon trail, and in an earlier passage, a week or two back, he had let his imagination dwell on that vast range of experience already crossed between the ages of 18 and 22.

> Shaw and Henry went off for buffaloes. H. killed two bulls. The Capt. very nervous and old-womanish at nooning—he did not like the look of the hills, which were at least half a mile off—there might be Inds. there, ready to pounce on the horses. In the afternoon, rode among the hills—plenty of antelope—lay on the barren ridge of one of them, and contrasted my present situation with my situation in the convent at Rome.

Surely no other historian has planned his life work so young, nor learned to write so hard a way. At the age of eighteen the whole scheme of his great work *France and England in North America* had captured his consciousness; there remained only to gather his material and to begin. One remembers the immense importance that Gibbon's biographers have attributed to his gentlemanly service in the Hampshire Militia, but what are we to think of a young historian who before starting to write his first volume, *The Conspiracy of Pontiac*, finds it necessary to make the long journey to Europe and Rome, there to stay in a Passionist monastery so that he may attain some imaginative sympathy with the Catholic missionaries who are to be the heroes of his second volume (published 24 years later) and after that to undertake his journey along the Oregon trail in quest of Indian lore, thus ruining his health for a lifetime in the mere gathering of background material?

Parkman was an uncertain stylist (as the admirable editor of these journals writes: "There seems to have been a natural instinct for the phrase that is just a shade too high, just as his ear was naturally faulty"), but his errors of taste are carried away on the great drive of his narrative, much as they are in the case of Motley and in our own day Mr. Churchill. He had ridden off with a single companion, like one of the heroes of his epic or a character in Fenimore Cooper, who had woken his genius, through the dangerous wilderness, he had eaten dog with the Indians and stayed in their moving villages, he had watched the tribes gather for war and heard the news of traders' deaths brought in. He had listened to Big Crow's own account of his savagery—"he has killed 14 men; and dwells with great satisfaction on the capture of a Utah, whom he took personally; and, with the other Sioux, scalped alive, cut the tendons of his wrist, and flung, still living, into a great fire." Since the seventeenth century no historian had so lived and suffered for his art. Like Prescott he all but lost his sight, so that he was forced to use a wire grid to guide his pencil, he suffered from misanthropy and a melancholia that snaps out like a dog even from his early journals ("the little contemptible faces—the thin, weak, tottering figures—that one meets here on Broadway, are disgusting. One feels savage with human nature"). The work planned at 18, began at 28, was only finished at 59, in the year before his death, by working against time and his own health. This was a poet's vocation, followed with a desperate intensity careless of consequences, and the journals are as important in tracing the course of the creative impulse as the journals of Henry James. And how closely we are reminded of the James family and their strange melancholia when we read in one of Parkman's letters:

> Between 1852 and 1860 this cerebral rebellion passed through great and seemingly capricious fluctuations. It had its ebbs and floods. Slight and sometimes imperceptible causes would produce an access which sometimes lasted with little respite for months. When it was in its milder moods, I used the opportunity to collect material and prepare ground for the future work, should work ever become practicable. When it was at its worst, the condition was not enviable. I could neither listen to reading nor engage in conversation, even of the lightest. Sleep was difficult, and was often banished entirely for one or two nights during which the brain was apt to be in a state of abnormal activity which had to be repressed at any cost, since thought produced the intensest torture. The effort required to keep the irritated organ quiet was so fatiguing that I occasionally rose and spent hours in the open air, where I found distraction and relief in watching the policemen and the tramps on the Malls of Boston Common, at the risk of passing for a tramp myself. Towards the end of the night this cerebral excitation would seem to tire itself out, and give place to a condition of weight and oppression much easier to bear.

Mr. Mason Wade is an impeccable editor, sensitive to the qualities of Parkman's style, its merits as well as its demerits, learned in his subject, passionately industrious in tracing the most transient character. His notes are often as fascinating as the text—on "Old Dick" for example, an odd job man on Lake George, who collected rattlesnakes and exhibited them in a box inscribed: "In this box a Rattell Snaick Hoo-was Kecht on Black mountaing. He is seven years old last July. Admittance sixpence site. Children half price, or notten," or on that strange character, Joseph Brant, alias Thayendanegea, Mohawk chief and freemason, who on one occasion saved from the stake a fellow mason who gave him the right sign. Brant was entertained by Boswell and painted by Romney. What a long way such a character seems from the murderers of the Jesuit Brébeuf (they baptised him with boiling water, cut strips of flesh from his living body and ate them, and opened his breast and drank his blood before he died).

Mr. Wade himself discovered these journals with the romantic and paradoxical simplicity of a Chesterton detective story, in Parkman's old Boston home on Chestnut Street.

> Parkman's Indian trophies still hung on the walls; the bookcases still held the well-worn editions of Byron, Cooper, and Scott which were his life-long favourites; and in the centre of the room, covered with a dust sheet, stood the desk on which the great histories had been written. This desk was two-sided; the drawers on one side had obviously been inspected and emptied of most of their contents . . . the drawers on the other side had been overlooked; they contained the missing journals and a great mass of correspondence, including some of the most important letters Parkman wrote and received.

For the general reader the most interesting of Mr. Wade's discoveries is Parkman's journal of the Oregon Trail which Mr. Wade rightly prefers to the work based on it—Parkman's first and most popular book, popular perhaps because of the way in which it was adulterated to suit the fashion of the time by his friend Charles Eliot Norton, "carefully bowdlerised of much anthropological data and many insights into Western life which seemed too crude to his delicate taste." Mr. Wade quotes several examples of these changes from the vivid fluid journal to the stilted literary tones—the false Cooperisms—of the book. These Cooperisms, still evident in *The Conspiracy of Pontiac*, Parkman gradually shed. Life and literature at the beginning lay uneasily with a sword between them, so that nothing in the early books has the same sense of individual speech and character that we find in the journal. Here from the journals is a certain Mr. Smith of Palermo:

> "Don't tell me about your Tarpeian rock. I've seen it, and what's more, the feller wanted I should give him half a dollar for taking me there. 'Now look here!' says I, 'do you s'pose I'm going to pay you for showing me this old pile of stones? I can see better rocks than this any day, for nothing; so clear out!' I'll tell you the way I do," continued Mr. Smith, "I don't go and *look* and *stare* as some people do when I get inside of a church, but I pace off the length and breadth, and then set it down on paper. Then, you see, I've got something that will keep!"

And here is an old soldier near the Canadian Border:

> On entering the bar-room, an old man with a sunburnt wrinkled face and no teeth, a little straw hat set on one side of his grey head—and who was sitting on a chair leaning his elbows on his knees and straddling his legs apart—thus addressed me: "Hullo! hullo! What's agoin' on, now? Ye ain't off to the wars already, be ye? Ther' ain't no war now as I knows on, though there's agoin' to be one afore long, as damned bloody as ever was fit this side o' hell!" . . . He then began to speak of some of his neighbours, one of whom he mentioned as "that G-d damnedest, sneakingest, nastiest puppy that ever went this side of hell!" Another he likened to a "sheep's cod dried"; another was "not fit to carry guts to a bear."

Only with his third book—*The Jesuits in North America*—did the marriage satisfactorily take place. In the deeply moving *Relations* of the Jesuits that form the greater part of his material he found again the power of characteristic speech: the tortured priest Bressani who wrote with bitter humour to his Superior, "I could not have believed that a man was so hard to kill," and in another letter of ironic apology to the Jesuit General in safe Rome: "I don't know if your Paternity will recognise the handwriting of one whom you once knew very well. The letter is soiled and ill-written; because the writer has only one finger of his right hand left entire, and cannot prevent the blood from his wounds, which are still open, from staining the paper. His ink is gunpowder mixed with water and his table is the earth."

By this time, too, Parkman had learned the value of bald narrative:

> Noel Chabanel came later to the mission; for he did not reach the Huron country until 1643. He detested the Indian life—the smoke, the vermin, the filthy food, the impossibility of privacy. He could not study by the smoke lodge-fire, among the noisy crowd of men and squaws, with their dogs, and their restless, screeching children. He had a natural inaptitude to learning the language, and labored at it for five years with scarcely a sign of progress. The Devil whispered a suggestion into his ear: Let him procure his release from these barren and revolting toils, and return to France, where congenial and useful employments awaited him. Chabanel refused to listen; and when the temptation still beset him, he bound himself by a solemn vow to remain in Canada to the day of his death.

And to complete the marriage Parkman had learned to control on occasion his poetic prose

* *The Journals of Francis Parkman*. Edited by Mason Wade. 2 Vols. *Eyre & Spottiswoode*. 50s.

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with fine effect as in this picture of Indian immortality:

> In the general belief, however, there was but one land of shades for all alike. The spirits, in form and feature as they had been in life, wended their way through dark forests to the villages of the dead, subsisting on bark and rotten wood. On arriving, they sat all day in the crouching posture of the sick, and, when night came, hunted the shades of animals, with the shades of bows and arrows, among the shades of trees and rocks; for all things, animate and inanimate, were alike immortal, and all passed together to the gloomy country of the dead.

The last notebook Parkman kept contains an account of his desperate final battle against insomnia—the amount of sleeping draught, the hours of sleep gained. One column, *A Half-Century of Conflict*, had to be finished and inserted in its place to complete the great scheme. The hours of sleeping dropped as low as 3½ and only once in the three-year record rose above eight. In that bare mathematical catalogue there is something of the spirit of Chabanel. The historian had made his vow forty years before and it was kept.

GRAHAM GREENE

LOOKING FOR SHAKESPEARE

Shakespeare. By IVOR BROWN. *Collins.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

A Life of Shakespeare. By HESKETH PEARSON. *Carroll & Nicholson.* 9*s.* 6*d.*

The writers of both these books are frankly in quest of Shakespeare the Man, and neither appears daunted by the paucity of signposts or by a terrain already trampled into mud. Upon what have such adventurers to rely? There are legal records from which we can derive the sketch of a litigious bourgeois at home in an acquisitive society; there is a handful of anecdotes—some trivial, some mutually contradictory and one scandalous; there are a bust and an engraving which concur in representing less a man than a pudding; and there is a somewhat discouraging inscription that starts: *Good frend for Iesvs sake forbeare . . .*

And after that there are the poems and plays. Surely much is to be learnt from them? There are those who maintain that the art is impenetrable; that the plays are a vast temple of rumour, filled with a bewildering diversity of voices, filled perhaps with all the voices that have ever been—except the sole voice of the man Shakespeare who was born and buried at Stratford-upon-Avon. Others of the learned have come to conclusions less negative. Consider that scene in *The Merry Wives* in which little William Page is examined by Sir Hugh touching his Latinity. "Hang-dog is Latin for bacon, I warrant you," Mistress Quickly comments. On the vexed question of authorship could there be a more positive beacon in the skies?

But the problem is one before which it is possible to remain moderately sensible. There are things which we can assert pretty confidently about Shakespeare the man; there are others that we can with equal confidence deny. Shakespeare had unusual powers of observation. He was certainly not a doctrinaire puritan; it is unlikely that during his active career he was a devout Catholic. Persuasions of this sort strengthen themselves as we become more familiar with the plays. So far we are taken in the two classical essays on the subject by Walter Bagehot and A. C. Bradley. But the method is dubious, subjective. Considering the plays as so many reservoirs of internal evidence can we find a technique which shall yield something like scientific certainty? Both the writers under review have been influenced by Miss Caroline Spurgeon's work on Shakespeare's imagery.

> It may be almost a form of blasphemy, treason, and heresy to say of England's hero that he was not a dog-lover: but Shakespeare frequently refers with distaste to fawning dogs, who are his symbols for odious flattery.

Thus Mr. Brown, following Miss Spurgeon, and I fear that the argument contains a fallacy crippling much of the hunt for Shakespeare that is the substance of his book. It is true that in the *imagery* of the plays dogs nearly always come in with unpleasant associations, and this regardless of what sort of character is speaking. But does it necessarily follow that what we have is Shakespeare's personal feeling about dogs seeping into the plays? Would anyone on the strength of this take on a bet that there were no dogs at New Place? Shakespeare may have disliked dogs at three or four, identifying them with his terrible and butcherly father. But at five or six he may have recovered (as most children do from these odd transferences) and as far as all his conscious knowledge went been fond of dogs for the rest of his life—the repressed strain of dislike and fear issuing only by the roundabout path of his dog-imagery. Indeed, we might bring up to support this several of the *real* dogs in the plays: Launce's dog (which, I think, is affectionately regarded) and Theseus' dogs (which are certainly admired). Everyday and substantial dogs, conceivably, Shakespeare got along with very well; it was only the phantasmal and infantile father-dog away down in his mind that fed the images welling up from there.

But if we can arrive at no certainty in this trivial contention, no more can we in matters crucial to Mr. Brown's recreation of Shakespeare's life-story. "For years the Dark Lady, in my opinion, kept him on edge, a figure adored and loathed, a memory that shone and scorched and tormented." Can we really with any confidence build this out of a line here and there descriptive of Romeo's Rosaline and Berowne's, of Cressida, of Cleopatra? Or plausibly lead that enigmatic story in the Sonnets to a climax in betrayal, near-madness, shattering disease? Mr. Brown's is eminently a bad-time Shakespeare; it was lucky for him that he had married his daughter to a distinguished physician. But here again fact is being rather too boldly educed from fiction. We ought not to accept the view that because a writer loads a play with imagery turning on physical disease he was necessarily himself a man oppressed by disease or the fear of disease. One of Webster's great tragedies is crammed full of animal-images—nearly a hundred of them, from fleas to lions, toads to dog-fish. Does this mean that Webster was busy at the time setting up with a zoological park? Does it even mean that in his everyday life animals in their diversity and curiousness particularly interested him? Surely it merely means that, consciously or unconsciously, he had evolved a technique for enforcing the sub-human atmosphere that he felt *The White Devil* to require. In these ingenious quests after the man it may always be the artist we run to earth after all.

It remains to say that Mr. Brown's is a highly stimulating and admirably written book. Mr. Pearson's, originally a Penguin and now reissued with additional matter, has interested me less. The writer, elsewhere so vigorous and versatile a biographer, is somewhat crotchety here. He doubts whether Shakespeare would have liked Shakespeareans any more than Christ would have liked Christians. I suspect—leaving the comparison aside—that this is a misjudgment of Shakespeare. He seems to have been quite willing to like those who liked him.

J. I. M. STEWART

WHAT IS MAN?

Personality in Nature, Society and Culture. Edited by CLYDE KLUCKHOHN and HENRY A. MURRAY. *Cape.* 30*s.*

Professor Clyde Kluckhohn, the cultural anthropologist, and Dr. Henry Murray, the psychologist, are both associated with the Department of Social Relations at Harvard, one of the most recent and most promising of several attempts made by American universities to conduct co-ordinated research on human behaviour and to produce some unity out of the diverse disciplines which have been moulded by historical accident, tradition and the differential rate of development of various aspects of social science. Traditional academic disciplines tend to separate different branches of knowledge in watertight compartments, so that the human geneticist knows nothing of sociology, the psychologist knows nothing of economics, and conversely; and this compartmentalisation has tended to put a strait-jacket on much thinking, so that energy is wasted on the discussion of pseudo-alternatives—the individual *or* society, nature *or* nurture, heredity *or* environment, and so on. Specialisation makes some concentration on single aspects inevitable; but unless there is cross-fertilisation, sterility is likely to follow.

The various attempts at a more unified social science have chiefly been originated by social anthropologists—above all the pupils of Franz Boaz and Edward Sapir—who have been exposed to the concepts of psychoanalysis and similar developments in psychology. Their first formulations on the extent to which personality (character) is moulded by the society of which the individual is a member, and the ways in which the culture of the society is manifested in the behaviour of its members, stimulated psychologists, psychiatrists and doctors to re-examine their own material; this in turn produced increasingly refined techniques of field-work by anthropologists. The science of "man-in-society" has made a promising start, synthesising aspects of disciplines which have hitherto been separated—anthropology, psychology, medicine, political science, economics, history, genetics.

Because this developing science is a new one, and because it straddles a number of hitherto disparate disciplines, the papers in which the advances are recorded are scattered in a very great number of learned (and often obscure) journals; for all except a small number of specialists, it is difficult to get a synoptic view of the field. To remedy this deficiency, and to

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COLLINS

supply a textbook for undergraduate courses, Messrs. Kluckhohn and Murray have collected together some forty papers which have appeared in the last ten years, and have written two introductory papers themselves. Since little of this material has hitherto been available in this country, the English edition is to be welcomed; it is to be hoped that some English publisher will be enterprising enough to issue also Professor Douglas Haring's *Personal Character and Cultural Milieu* and *Readings in Social Psychology* (edited by Newcomb and Hartley), both of which contain important papers omitted from this compilation to avoid duplication.

This volume suffers somewhat from its attempt to be all-inclusive. It is undoubtedly salutary to rectify the over-simplified concepts of many psychiatrists and sociologists by emphasising the physiological nature of man and what is known of his constitutional endowment; but human genetics, comparative physiology and "psychosomatic" medicine are vast subjects with an enormous literature; to include a handful of recent papers on these subjects is at the same time too much and too little. Students hitherto ignorant will get the merest smattering of knowledge from these hundred pages, and will almost inevitably see both the material and the methods illustrated out of perspective; and the selection is too small and too uneven to be of use to people seriously interested in these subjects.

The greater part of the material is, however, novel and interesting both in subject matter and treatment: in particular the papers of Erik Homburger Erikson, Allison Davis, A. Irving Hallowell, John Dollard and John Gillin—none of whom, as far as I know, has hitherto been published in England—are both informative and stimulating. There are also excellent papers by Ruth Benedict and Margaret Mead. The editors have supplied a long original paper on the *Outline of a Conception of Personality;* despite the "scientificese" jargon in which it is written, it represents the clearest thinking on this confused subject which has appeared since our knowledge of the implications of the term has been so greatly extended.

No review can hope to subsume such disparate material by so many authors. In their introductory chapter the editors write "Every man is in certain respects (*a*) like all other men, (*b*) like some other men, (*c*) like no other man." Most of the papers explore the implications of (*b*), showing the extent to which membership of a group (society, class, caste, etc.) influences the personality of the component individuals. Material is presented from many societies, though naturally most from the U.S.A., and sections thereof; cumulatively they add a great deal to our knowledge of man and of society.

GEOFFREY GORER

EARLY FRENCH ART

Art in Mediaeval France 987-1498. A Study of Patronage. By JOAN EVANS. *Geoffrey Cumberlege.* £3 3s.

The Englishman whose understanding of the subject covered in this book has until now been based only on visits to museums or, at best, antiquarian tours in France, will no doubt suppose that here, at last, is a comprehensive study to explain such matters as the decline of the Romanesque, the development of the Gothic, and the choice of different architectural terms by the various religious orders. He will be disappointed: in *Art in Mediaeval France*, Dr. Evans attempts to impose the methods of scientific research upon a ground of picturesque interpretation, and in doing so, proves them incompatible.

Not that her interpretation entirely prevents her method from yielding interesting results. The grouping together of architecture, sculpture, etc., according to patron and not period, is always far more illuminating than a general survey. But in her text, as in her bibliography, Dr. Evans seems unaware of certain studies that are of fundamental importance for the understanding of French sculpture and architecture: of, for example, the writings of Dr. Meyer Schapiro, and Krautheimer's revolutionary essay on the iconography of the Gothic cathedrals. Dr. Evans is more informative when she describes the patrons themselves, but even so, she is apt to wander off into romantic digressions of a sort more often encountered in Victorian histories and travel-books. "Lovely" is one of her favourite epithets; the altarpiece from which the Maître de Moulins takes his name is "lovely," and indeed a vague sense of "loveliness" seems to infuse Dr. Evans' entire conception of the French Middle Ages. Science and rapture are not easily wed. Too often the theme is obscured behind the clichés of an outmoded aestheticism.

This fault is particularly irritating in the chapters devoted to secular art. It is a seductive subject, as all who saw those miraculous tapestries, *le Cerf Volant* and *La Dame à la Licorne*, at South Kensington will know. But its seductions are surely too obvious to linger on in a study that is ostensibly scientific. Naturally Dr. Evans marshals the most bewitching quotations, the most exquisite examples. Confronted with Jacques Coeur's house at Bourges, for instance, it is impossible not to feel grateful to its builder for his example in erecting the first wholly comfortable dwelling since the passing of the Roman villa. Its luxury is astonishing: every embellishment, from the sculptures over the doors to the angel supporting the weathervane on the roof, conveys a sense of riches and well-being. (Of the angel, incidentally, there is a remarkable photograph showing not only the extreme sophistication of the artist's style, but the prodigal gratuitous care with which he has "modelled" a figure designed to be seen from, at the closest, a distance of fifty feet.) Dr. Evans is clearly at home in describing the life of Jacques Coeur and his worldly contemporaries. Nevertheless she cannot be said to deal seriously with their culture when no attempt is made to analyse the art of Melchior Broederlam, to name only one of the many artists who in this epoch acquired an international significance.

Indeed, Dr. Evans' account of early French panel-painting is impossibly fragmentary and inaccurate. This subject is squeezed into three paragraphs and a few references *en passant*, generally to pictures that illuminate some other aspect of art. Worse, Dr. Evans does not always reproduce works of French origin: the National Gallery Trinity (Plate 200) is certainly Austrian, the Retable from the Deutsches Museum (Plate 143) German, and the Crucifixion from the Chartreuse de Champnol, now in the Louvre (Plate 137) probably Spanish, and certainly not by Henri Bellechose. Dr. Evans is also far from up-to-date in her information about certain pictures. It is many years since Mantegna's St. Sebastian was at Aigueperse, the Somsée Collection was dispersed in 1910, so it is hard to identify its Madonna with Saints and Donor (can it be the Flemish picture in the Salting Bequest at the National Gallery?), and, finally, the Liechtenstein portrait by the Master of 1456 no longer carries the jaunty cap painted on by a later restorer.

Still, *Art in Mediaeval France* is the only English book on the subject, and as such valuable to students and travellers. Future visitors to

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France will be grateful for the map marking all buildings of architectural importance. And if the lyrical descriptions of Cluniac architecture inspire them actually to set foot in the Church of St. Germain-des-Prés, Dr. Evans will not have written in vain. DAVID CARRITT

HARRY ROBERTS

"Doctor Himself." By WINIFRED STAMP. *Hamish Hamilton.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

Dr. Harry Roberts was the only man I have ever known who, after a hard day's work and a hard evening's argument, would begin about midnight to dictate an article for one of the weeklies and then, at two o'clock in the morning, cut himself a large plate of cold meat, cold potatoes and pickles, take these to bed, along with a pint of beer, and wake you up with a cup of tea at eight o'clock the next morning having already himself done two hours' early digging in the garden. That he lived until he was seventy-five is proof of an extraordinary constitution. He seems never to have required more than four hours' sleep, and he would continue work when he was obviously very ill indeed. On one occasion, he completed a long session in the surgery with several broken ribs—a disability that was only discovered when he fainted. He built more than one private medical practice in the country, riding long distances on horseback and surviving a variety of accidents with a horse and trap. The popularity of his practice in Stepney was proved by a queue that made visitors mistake his surgery for a cinema. In his early days in London he actually did five hundred midwifery cases, in addition to the rest of his practice, single-handed, in the course of a year.

Winifred Stamp, who was a remarkable person in her own right as well as the ideal partner for Harry Roberts, recalls many good stories of their life together in the East End; she omits one of a woman who, because she had never failed with her husband's supper, insisted on cooking kippers when her baby was clamouring to be born. When her husband arrived, Harry presented him with a baby in one hand and a pair of nicely done kippers in the other. His unique reputation was based in the first place on the fact that as a newly arrived doctor in a slum area, he not only delivered a woman of a child without a pre-paid fee, but also made her a cup of tea after the birth. His East End practice was finally divided between five partners. It grew into what can be fairly described as the first Public Health Centre. It was obliterated by a bomb during the war, but rose again on an attenuated scale.

Harry Roberts was many things as well as a doctor. He was first of all a countryman who knew all about making cider, keeping animals and growing plants. He was an expert gardener, and wrote several books and innumerable articles on the subject. The most remarkable garden he created was that at Oakshott, the surprising house which he and Winifred Stamp built together on a clearing in a Hampshire hanger. On that hillside of chalk, leaf-mould had to be carried by hand from the woods and turned into soil with an expert use of human manure. Here they built not only their own house but small wooden huts in the woods where many tubercular children have recovered health and where, in later years, many well-known people have lived and worked. Winifred Stamp, who was herself so much responsible for the success of Oakshott, can scarcely do justice to this part of their joint lives. Oakshott (and its woodlands) has now been sold; those who loved it are dispersed, and none, it may be, will feel able to say more about its great days than Mr. Pritchett does in his admirable introduction to this biography.

During the Thirties, Harry Roberts was looking after his medical practice (which included the legal and social problems of innumerable families) for two days a week. He was also writing a large number of books and producing a steady stream of five or six articles every week. He wrote for many papers. He reviewed criminology and medicine for *The Times Literary Supplement*. He wrote for the *Spectator* as well as for THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION, and he did at least two weekly articles that were syndicated. He did himself a rank injustice when he used to call these popular articles "hog wash." They were, on the contrary, careful, simple, useful and expert articles on popular medical and social topics. But he used to say that he had to be fairly drunk to write them, while he had to be nearly sober to write his weekly or fortnightly articles for this journal. I should add here that Harry was never, to my knowledge, in the least drunk, but he had periods when he would both drink and smoke heavily, stopping both by an effort of will when he thought that it would be good for his health to go without.

I have referred only to a few of the activities which Winifred Stamp records in Dr. Roberts' biography. One of the best keys to the understanding of this extraordinary man was his attitude to politics. He has been constantly and rightly compared to Cobbett. He was argumentative, pugnacious and often apparently deliberately perverse. His politics were deeply rooted in his experience. He had read the books and could talk theory. (I forgot to mention that he both bought and read books wholesale covering a vast field of human knowledge. When he died, his house as well as the shop in Petersfield, which began as a kind of overflow of his life, was so cluttered with gigantic piles of books that it was with difficulty that one could make one's way from room to room.) But books were not the source of his opinions. The appalling misery and poverty of the East End when he first knew it sixty years ago made him a Radical and Socialist. After trying out the various Socialist groups in London in the Eighties and Nineties, he joined the Fabians, but he could never be a Fabian. He admired Shaw and Webb, but his approach to life was through people and not through statistics or theory. Lowes Dickinson, who also for a short time sat at the feet of the Webbs, rejected Fabianism because he heard Mrs. Webb say that marriage was "the waste paper basket of the emotions"! Harry Roberts, to whom personal relations were ultimately the most important thing, reacted in exactly the same way. He was at heart a Protestant individualist. He rejoiced in the immense improvement in the standard of living and of general well-being that he witnessed during his life-time in the East End. He did not feel like Bernard Shaw, who said that his only interest in the poor was to abolish them. He did not want things tidy. He enjoyed all the racy muddle of life, and for that reason he sometimes talked like a Conservative. In short, his Socialism was a radical revolt against injustice and misery, not a belief in a deliberately planned social order.

Harry Roberts was a completely unconventional man. He was never Bohemian, for Bohemianism is by its nature wasteful of time and effort. He was, on the contrary, practical and full of common sense. But it was his own personal kind of common sense. If Oakshott was never locked up, and sometimes casually inhabited, that was not because it was unconventional to leave it open, but because it was convenient for other people to be able to go in if none of the family was there. He was so practical and so fond of people that he could easily have committed a murder (he may have done for all I know) provided that he felt sure that it would make people happier, cause no suffering to the victim and that it was unlikely to be found out.

I wish I could paint a picture of Harry Roberts as I last remember him. His heart had given way at last; it had become a kind of private joke between him and his neighbour, Lord Horder, who popped in regularly, partly to discuss such matters as a joint book about the ethics of Christ and the progress of the less obvious plants in their gardens, and partly, as if by an afterthought, to take soundings of Harry's cardiac

murmur. He had gone to bed in his enormous study, a big rafted room in which all his immediate activities were centred. He was surrounded by bookshelves containing thousands of books of reference on special subjects, particularly medicine, scientific philosophy, criminology, piracy and vagabondage. The books overflowed in great stacks from the floors to the ceiling. Then there was a big E.M.G. gramophone and a great library of records. There were shelves of medicines and, on free space of the floor, sheets of brown newspaper on which were drying various herbs and petals of roses and other flowers which he was turning into potpourri. By his bedside were a supply of sweets for him to suck in the night and a pile of books which he had selected for that night's reading. There were also various pills and medicines in case of emergency. He had taken his teeth out and was obviously tickled by the picture he presented. He pointed, chuckling, to all the different objects he had collected for his comfort and amusement. He knew that he was quite likely to die in the night and that I knew it. His eyebrows went up high and he shrugged his shoulders with a characteristic gesture. His look and his laugh said, "Yes, it is all very odd. Here am I doing just what I want to do, as always. Tomorrow I may be dead. In the meantime I am allowing no scrap of life to go past unused and unenjoyed."

KINGSLEY MARTIN

NEW NOVELS

Green Grow the Rushes. By HOWARD CLEWES. *The Bodley Head.* 9*s.* 6*d.*

The River Line. By CHARLES MORGAN. *Macmillan.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

The Tares and the Wheat. By WALTER MARSDEN. *Hodder & Stoughton.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

Mr. Graham Greene long ago adopted the practice of dividing his works into "entertainments" and novels while M. Gide, making a different distinction, used the words *récit* and *roman*. Mr. Evelyn Waugh said of one of his novels that it was, and of another that it was *not*, "meant to be funny." Junior novelists might well take a tip from these eminent professionals. Label your books or one of them will label you. Mr. Howard Clewes who has begun to acquire a reputation as a straight novelist, has written a book which puts him in some danger of being labelled "funny," and this would be a pity, for while *Green Grow the Rushes* is in fact very entertaining, its main interest, I think, lies in its revelation of a new facet of a serious talent. It is an unusual book, as it does very well something which few contemporary novelists appear to be able to do at all—it bridges the gap between unsophisticated humour and sophisticated amusement. It is set in the Kentish marshes, and turns on the conflict between the locals and an agricultural planning commission. It is, in essence, the traditional story of the dumb yokel who scores off the clever person from the town, and it would be very easy to write dismissively about the kind of humour to which this situation gives rise. There is Urquhart, the mild old coastguard whose upper denture is loose:

> So Urquhart kept his mouth shut and his teeth clenched; the habit lent his mildest words a curious menace, as of bitter bottled fury, hardly less alarming for those who did not know him than the sudden snap of falling teeth.

Or the procession of Charter Virgins on Charter Day, which had to be cancelled because it was so much impeded by perambulators. "If Mr. Clewes is the kind of writer who thinks that ill-fitting false teeth and illegitimate children are proper subjects for humour," etc. But ill-fitting false teeth and illegitimate children are, of course, sources of endless delight in the Sunday afternoon gagging-session in the shade of a beached fishing boat, and without being hearty or patronising or anything else distasteful. Mr. Clewes has managed to pass this on. The plot slips into fantasy, the comedy into farce, the love interest is conventional and the three commissioners (although real enough as individuals) are merely stock bogies from the fairy-land of anti-control narking. Yet with all its faults this is a high-spirited, good-humoured, lively, well-written piece of fooling, and it is encouraging to remember that the man who wrote it is the author of *Dead Ground*, a novel which was both intelligent and moving. The make-up of his talent is eccentric and may easily turn out to be truly original.

The River Line, though it might be called a *récit*, is certainly not an "entertainment"; nor is it meant to be funny. There was a time, in the Thirties, when the works of Mr. Charles Morgan represented the giddy palladium of upper-middle-brow culture. Those were the days when Reading Circles were torn in two by *The Fountain*. "Too highbrow" for some, for others it was the lightning flash which revealed the mindlessness of Galsworthy, the carnality of Walpole. All over the country reviewers were awakened from their dogmatic slumbers, and hailed a new master. Then came *Sparkenbroke*. *Sparkenbroke* was received with initial enthusiasm, but a reaction set in, and many of its admirers found themselves in the position of the very young man who, having joined in praising the wine at a party, learns afterwards that his particular bottle was found to be corked. The reputation which *Sparkenbroke* acquired introduced a note of caution, not only into the praise of Mr. Morgan's admirers, but apparently into Mr. Morgan's own work. His next novel, *The Voyage*, was a chastened and negative kind of book. Unimportant in itself, it may, however, be taken as introducing his Later Period. In this both the ineffability of *The Fountain* and the efflorescence of *Sparkenbroke* have largely disappeared; the air is less rarefied and the subject matter is more commonplace. This tendency was clearly seen in *The Judge's Story*, but is also evident in *The River Line*. In so far as this deals with an escape through occupied France—and a good deal of the narrative is actually devoted to this—the subject matter is exceedingly commonplace, and Mr. Morgan hardly justifies it by any special use that he makes of it. It is true that his main interest lies, not in the physical adventures, but in their post-war spiritual effects, but here his characters appear to be chronically in the condition of having experienced the incommunicable, and the novel is accordingly divided into action which has no significance apart from its interpretation, and an interpretation which is vapid. When something does come through the effect is not always pleasing. Mr. Morgan is interested, among other subjects, in the *mystique* of Service discipline. An incident in which a professional Naval Officer takes instant fatal action on the orders of a young French girl seemed to me to exploit this mystique for a rather cheap effect. It is a matter of taste, but (its odd how *Stalky* keeps coming into this) there was something about this incident which momentarily reminded me of the jelly-bellied flag flapper.

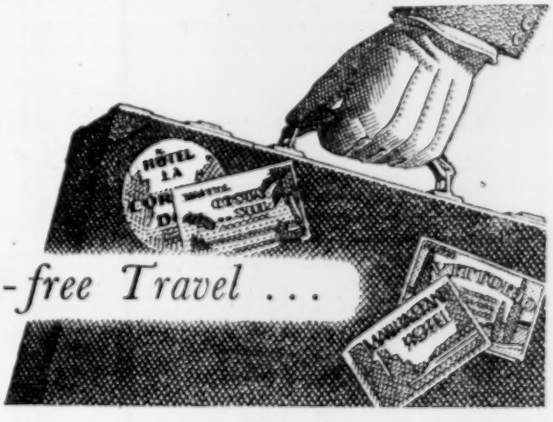
Mr. Walter Marsden has suffered more than most from publishing delays. *The Tares and the Wheat* is subtitled "A novel of modern Czechoslovakia," and this naturally leads one to expect an outburst of either agit-prop or war-mongering. Actually the book is set in the period before February, 1948, and is almost non-political. It is a book with an elaborate plot, long, unhurried, and in the end convincing. It includes a character study of a collaborator which, in its fairness and lack of hysteria, makes grim reading, and by contrast, a love affair between a young English couple who get worked up about what our grandparents would have called a "stolen kiss." At times one suspects the author of having put a travel book in the form of a novel, but one comes to realise that if he has done so, it is because he *is* a novelist, endowed with a modest cosmopolitanism, but also with a novelist's gifts for the creation of character and the interlacing of incident.

J. D. SCOTT

THE MAN WHO WAS WALL STREET

The Great Pierpont Morgan. By FREDERICK LEWIS ALLEN. *Gollancz.* 15*s.*

J. P. Morgan: even to-day the name holds the chime of wealth, ringing down through the years as the echo of an age of gold, of trusts, rock-ribbed Republicanism, speculation, of the private railway coach, the luxury yacht and economic power on the grand scale. Morgan, personally, was not rich as Rockefeller and Carnegie were rich. The son of a prosperous banker who could afford to send him to the University of Göttingen, Morgan's life did not fit into the pattern of Horatio Alger's success stories of the poor boy who made good. Harriman was an office-boy, Gould a tanner, Rockefeller a clerk. When his contemporaries—Teddy Roosevelt's "malefactors of great wealth"—were bribing judges and even whole legislatures, swindling and bulldozing their way to the top, Morgan had no need for the techniques of the



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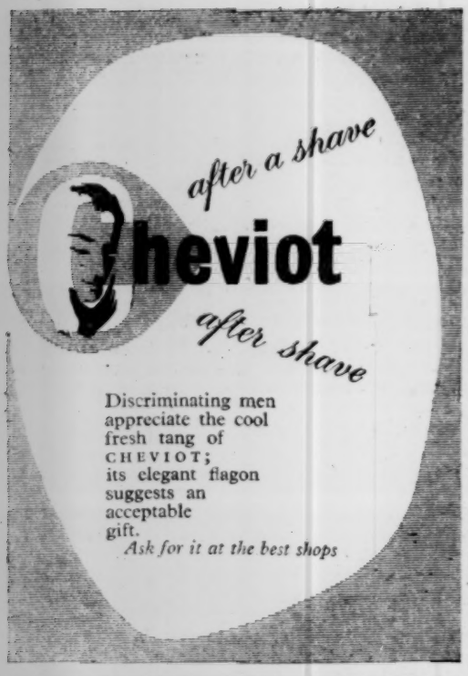

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buccaneer and could spend his time, with great dignity, hobnobbing with the bishops in the Episcopal Convention. Yet, more than anyone else, he was the symbol of the "money-power" which ruled America from Wall Street. The Pennsylvania miner fought the coal operators, the people of Montana struggled against Anaconda Copper, the unions were broken by the legal servants of the corporations, the farmer was ruined by debt, speculators and unsound banking. Trace back the tangled skein of finance and the threads, more often than not, run through the doors of No. 23 Wall Street. Morgan did not pay graft, Morgan did not hire gunmen to deal with union organisers, Morgan did not call out the troops to protect his property, Morgan did not ruin the small investors. But the House of Morgan was there behind the bankers, the railway promoters, stock-jobbers, coal-owners and industrialists, advising, co-ordinating, raising capital and creating monopolies, the extent of its domain vast if obscurely defined. In a crisis, it was to Morgan that the financial world—even, on one occasion, the U.S. Treasury—turned for help. Morgan's own hands, perhaps, were clean, but they held the strings of power.

Naturally, such a man attracts the biographer. But how to interpret him? His own passion for secrecy helped to confuse the legends with the facts. Every important move he made has since been the cause of bitter controversy. Was he another "robber baron," more sophisticated than the rest, perhaps, but none the less indifferent to the seamy side of the society through which he strode like a king? Was his life guided by the conviction that nothing must challenge the unfettered rule of "the Christian men to whom," George F. Baer believed, "God in his infinite wisdom has given the control of the property interests of the country"? Or was he, as Mr. Allen suggests, a man who was seeking to bring economic order and stability out of piracy and chaos, not for gain, primarily, but for principle? If that was his motive, many of his sins may be forgiven him. He may not have understood that the growth of giant corporations might imperil a democracy, for he was not a democrat. Extremes of wealth and poverty, in a period when Carnegie received fifteen million dollars a year and a textile worker earned three hundred, certainly did not trouble his composure. They were the unavoidable product of a social system he never thought to question.

By taking this approach, Mr. Allen has given us an interesting biography, written with his customary grace and skill. Reacting perhaps too sharply against the harsh judgments of other Morgan biographers, in his effort to be fair, and seeking to convey an impression of Morgan as a *man* rather than as the domineering *financier*, Mr. Allen has been more than fair: his finished portrait is surprisingly sympathetic. The personal virtues are stressed: honesty, charity, the collector's fever which made the Morgan Library a storehouse of cultural treasures. Yet Morgan is almost always given the benefit of any doubt. Roger Fry's cynical description of his employer buying his way through European art is offset by Mr. Allen's own explanation of this acquisitive crusade. Mr. Allen may be right here as on other personal matters. Certainly, he has pieced together the parts of the man, as a father, a vestryman in New York, a host, a yachting enthusiast. But, in one anecdote after another, Morgan displays the same facets of personality—especially his capacity for rapid and almost ruthless decision and his intolerance of opposition—in his personal affairs as well as an economic man. But Mr. Allen seems reluctant to underline this comparison; Morgan's professional behaviour, consequently, is discussed more in personal than social terms. Admittedly, Mr. Allen set out to discuss J. Pierpont Morgan and not The House of Morgan, and one can understand his reluctance to drag his readers too deeply into the morass of American finance at the beginning of this century. But is it enough to dismiss most of Morgan's critics by oblique references in neat but all too summary accounts of such controversial matters as the Northern Securities case or the Tennessee Coal and Iron purchase?

It is true that Mr. Allen makes a good case. He shows how Morgan's entry into railway finance and control was prompted by disgust at the waste and disorderly conduct which followed from cut-throat competition—to which combination seemed the sane answer. He traces this motive at work in the formation of the United States Steel Trust, in the shipping and farm machinery combines. He insists that Morgan cared less for profit than probity, that sound finance was as much a cardinal faith with him as his fundamentalist attachment to the Episcopal Church. Morgan, by the standards of his time, was a good man, going to meet his God with a clean heart. If, Mr. Allen seems to be saying, we accept the honesty of his assumptions, then we may criticise him politically but we may not morally condemn him. Now, once motive and result are thus separated, that may seem a reasonable argument. But surely the moral tragedy of Pierpont Morgan lay precisely in this divorce of personal morality and social consequences? He did not have to go down into the arena and measure the human and political cost of his operations: the truth is that he concerned himself with the moral character of his friends, colleagues, and rivals, not with the moral character of the system they controlled. It was this social blindness that fascinated Lincoln Steffens whenever he met these oligarchs and led him to see, in the end, that it was the *good* men who made the system *bad*. If I am right, then Mr. Allen's emphasis upon Morgan's personal motives is irrelevant, though it gives his book some fascinating human interest. For the crucial question is not whether the Great Pierpont Morgan was impelled by honest and understandable motives, but whether the ends to which those motives led him were socially harmful. On balance, they undoubtedly were. The real plea in mitigation is that Morgan was not as bad as he might have been. But that is a poor apology.

NORMAN MACKENZIE

POST-WAR RUSSIA

Man and Plan in Soviet Economy. By ANDREW ROTHSTEIN. *Muller.* 10s. 6d.

So This is Russia. By YNGVE LUNDBERG and SÖREN HELLSTROM. *Falcon Press.* 5s.

Mr. Rothstein's book, for all its limitations, is a valuable corrective to the Hell-on-Earth literature on Russia that has been flooding the book-markets of the West in the last three or four years. This deluge was not altogether spontaneous, and the promotion of certain books of this type was clearly part of the Cold War. Those who have been advocating a policy of "toughness" with Russia since the war have invariably made use of the kind of books which represent her as being one gigantic concentration camp. And in this camp—so the theory goes—a rebellion "against Stalin" would break out as soon as the first atom bomb—God bless it!—was dropped on Moscow. How the Soviet Union, under such a system, ever managed to make mincemeat of Hitler's armies, and how, since the war, despite colossal destruction throughout Southern and Western Russia, and the loss of at least seven million lives, she has succeeded in making a mostly first-class job of her post-war reconstruction, none of the writers of the Hell-on-Earth school has ever convincingly explained. That there are many ugly sides to the Soviet regime no one can deny, and it is perhaps a pity that Mr. Rothstein, who bases his study of the Soviet economic system exclusively on published Soviet material, should gloss over such examples of collective ruthlessness as the liquidation of the kulaks, or should make no attempt to analyse, in its proper perspective, the question of forced labour—just as if it did not exist at all. Since forced labour (though on a very much smaller scale than anti-Soviet propaganda has made out) does exist, it would have been better if Mr. Rothstein had given his views on it.

But when this is said, Mr. Rothstein's analysis

is still extremely valuable to anyone who wants to understand the main features of the organisation and the labour mechanism by which the Soviet Union functions. For the Soviet Union *does* function—and, in many respects, very impressively. Quoting chapter and verse, Mr. Rothstein explains thoroughly both the "managerial" side and the "human" side of Soviet industrial production.

Without underrating the importance of working-class enthusiasm, he does not, at the same time, exaggerate it, and explains very fully the various purely material inducements that are offered the Russian workers in the promotion of Stakhanovism, Socialist Competition, and so forth. One of his most useful chapters is that on "Collective Farms and the Individual" in which he explains how, by and large, the system has been a success.

As he rightly points out, without this form of agricultural organisation, an economic catastrophe would scarcely have been avoided, both during the war, and as a result of the 1946 drought. Some of his illustrations of post-war "self-criticism" in the villages, and of the regimentation of the peasantry during the critical post-war years (especially after the 1946 drought) are particularly valuable to anyone wishing to understand how Russia "turned the corner" in 1947. The sharp process of post-war disciplining that Kaganovich was instructed by the Kremlin to apply to the Ukraine, after its peasants had lost something of their "Soviet-consciousness" during the war years, might have been more effectively described if Mr. Rothstein had been there at the time; and this episode—one of the most important in Russia's post-war reconstruction—fails to receive the emphasis it deserves. Even so, there is much factual material in the book that will be of great value to any serious student of Soviet war-time and post-war economics.

So This is Russia, by two Swedish journalists, Mr. Lundberg, "who lived for five years in the Soviet," and Mr. Hellstrom, who "recently completed a 6,000-mile tour of the Union" (how—on foot or in an aeroplane?—we are not told) is like a demonstration of the vanity of time and space. Why travel so much and why live all those years in Russia when an hour's chat with a lady guide from Intourist ("The Tsarist authorities had prohibited the reading of practically all Western literature") would have supplied them with most of the material for this little book? In fact, that is almost what our authors did whenever in doubt; true, they did not consult lady guides from Intourist, but they keep quoting the absurd and hidebound Mr. Kemenov, of Voks, whom they even give the exalted title of "Minister of Culture." For the rest, the main thesis of the book is that Russia is a nice country, has a tremendous reconstruction job on her hands, and has no aggressive designs against anybody—a reasonable conclusion to a mediocre demonstration.

What puzzled me most is that after leaving Russia in 1947, Mr. Lundberg wrote in the Swedish press some articles on living conditions in Russia which quickly got him into Mr. Zaslavsky's zoo of Fascist Beasts and Social-Democratic Toads. Did the petty annoyances of the foreign journalist's life in Moscow get him down at the time, and have the effect of these—in some ways, admittedly irrelevant—annoyances now worn off? Or is this Lundberg another Lundberg? In which case my apologies to both.

ALEXANDER WERTH

AN ECCENTRIC SQUIRE

The Strange Life of Charles Waterton. By RICHARD ALDINGTON. *Evans.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

The standard of eccentricity in this country has always been very high. (We impress foreigners almost as much with the absurdity of our "mad Englishmen" as with that of our national game of cricket.) But if ever we were challenged to field a representative team of our greatest eccentrics Charles Waterton could be sure of a place in the first eleven. Yet this strange being, who spent his entire life in deviating from the normal, could not bear the word "eccentric" to be applied to him. "The most commonplace of men" was his opinion of himself, if one can believe him. Of course no one did believe him. If anyone else had called him that, he would have been furious. But such a ridiculous statement only went to prove what a thorough-going old oddity he was.

In his *Four English Portraits* last year Mr. Aldington gave a rather summary account of this peculiar man. The present volume is an admirable full-length study of his life and character; with the fantastic episodes of his career arranged in the probable order of their occurrence; and a caustic commentary (for which Mr. Aldington's bluff style is well qualified) on human nonsense in general and Waterton's unorthodox brand of it in particular.

A list of his principal activities may give some idea of Waterton. He was an ardent naturalist and an intrepid explorer; a snake-handler; a rat catcher; a bird watcher; a taxidermist; and an expert on curare, the South American Indian arrow poison. He was also a bigoted Roman Catholic, a Yorkshire squire and a Jacobite; a teetotaller, a tree-climber, a practical joker, and a bit of an acrobat. (He could—and did—scratch the back of his head with his big toe.) But whatever he was engaged on, he could never behave like a rational adult. Not that he was in any way mad. As Mr. Aldington shrewdly observes, he was a Peter Pan who could never grow up. Until the day of his death in 1865 at the age of eighty-three he never lost the impulsiveness, the high spirits and the unpredictability of a schoolboy. To take a single instance of the irrepressible old boy at work: when guests arrived at Walton Hall, his Yorkshire home, an elderly gentleman in a swallow tail coat would occasionally rush out at them on all fours, growling like a dog and biting them in the leg.

The Squire, as his Yorkshire neighbours called him, did his best to write his own life. His *Wanderings in South America* were published in 1825; and the three later volumes of essays are each prefaced with a portion of his autobiography. But, although his memory of facts need not be mistrusted, the sequence of events is obscure and the dates given are often impossible to reconcile: moreover, the exaggeratedly fanciful style, with its Latin tags and its feeble pastiche of *Tristram Shandy*, acts as a severe deterrent to any modern reader. Mr. Aldington, by the compass of common sense, has followed the tracks of the Squire through the jungle of verbiage and inconsistency; and is well rewarded for his voyage of exploration. *The Strange Life of Charles Waterton* brings to light a perfect specimen of that remarkable bird, the old English eccentric, in all his glory.

RALPH PARTRIDGE

Week-end Competition

No. 1,018

Set by William Salter

The usual prizes are offered for an epigram on the news that the British Army is to be issued with *ponchos*, an article of dress traditionally associated with the *gauchos* of the *Pampas*. Entries by August 30.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 1,015

Set by Jub-jub

The usual prizes are offered for a soliloquy by any one of the portraits in the Royal Academy, Munich or Vienna exhibitions, on the visitors they have had during the last three months. Entries may be in verse (14 lines) or prose (150 words).

Report by Jub-jub

The entertainment has been mutual. Portraits had their own special visitor in the same way as some of us had our own special portrait. But admiration was by no means the chief emotion felt on the other side of the frame. *Nicolas Albergati* had continually to remind himself "Yet these withstood the blast of

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